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NOW THAT THE RUSSIAN Soviet Government is celebrating its eighth birthday, it is certainly time to stop regarding it as a temporary affair. In 1917 and the years immediately following, the fall of the Soviets was predicted hourly; making the wish father to the thought, our best minds pictured Russia about to be freed from the blood-thirsty Communists and delivered into the hands of its friends, the Grand Duke Alexandrovitch or Admiral Kolchak or General Denikin, or any number of valiant royalists. Nothing of the sort has happened, and the White opposition has become only a memory. By whatever methods, the revolutionary government has not only made itself an undeniable fact but has quieted, even among its most ardent ill-wishers, the prophecy of its imminent demise. The articles in the pages that follow show that this government, which was to last, at most, six weeks, is now turning its thoughts to matters which require a considerable amount of leisure, confidence, and stability.

EXPERIMENTS in prison reform, astonishing figures in book publishing, a peasant Soviet carrying on its double task of governing and educating, a flourishing motion-picture industry, a new theater—all these are reassuring and of the utmost interest. The recent two-hundredth-anniversary celebration of the Russian Academy of Science is equally so; and the figures given by the Institute of Planned Economics of the Soviet Union, which compare this year's industrial conditions both with estimates for 1926 and with figures for 1913, the last pre-war year, indicate that Russian industry, also, is being rapidly rehabilitated. Agriculture and industry have each risen to 71 per cent of pre-war figures; next year they are estimated at 89 and 91 per cent, respectively. Russia is no longer on the edge of a precipice; in another five years, with the present rapid rate of advance, the pre-war prosperity, such as it was, will have been passed, and without any outside help, without a Dawes plan, with the aid only of an utterly impossible idea of government—so it has been called times without number—Russia will have pulled itself up by its bootstraps.

WHAT'S THIS, WHAT'S THIS? Here is the Coolidge administration bringing about the indictment of the Alien Property Custodian, Thomas W. Miller, and other men, German, Swiss, and American, on the testimony of Roxie Stinson, Jess Smith's former wife; Gaston B. Means, the jail-bird and crook; one Elmer Jarnecke, also a convict; and "Mal" Daugherty, brother of the famous Harry Daugherty, lately Mr. Harding's and Mr. Coolidge's Attorney General. It was for calling these very persons as witnesses that Senator Brookhart and Senator Wheeler, in probing the affairs of the Department of Justice, were denounced by the leading Republican dailies. As for the Republican National Committee, it foamed at the mouth and issued statement after statement demanding to know if all the jails were to be emptied and the sewers to be dragged in order to besmirch dead men who could not rise from their graves and honorable and respected Republican office-holders like Albert Fall and Harry Daugherty. Well, what will the big-business press say now? We do not question that it will applaud this series of indictments as warmly as it opposed Mr. Wheeler's merciless flaying of evil-doers. Mr. Miller is accused of taking a $100,000 bribe to turn back $7,000,000 of German property to its former owners, while $331,000 more is said to have been divided between John T. King (yes, the same John T. King), formerly Republican committeeman from Connecticut, and Jess Smith (the same Jess Smith who killed himself in Harry Daugherty's apartment after having had a desk next to the Attorney General in the Department of Justice).

IT WAS SENATOR WHEELER who uncovered the first traces of these irregularities. The metropolitan dailies that abused him so then will be sure to forget to give him the slightest credit for it now. Which reminds us that the same administration of the Department of Justice which considers the punishment of this corruption "the most important case it has had since Mr. Daugherty got out," and intends to prosecute it to the limit with all possible speed and determination, cannot find the time to bring to trial its second indictment of Senator Wheeler, the case

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in the District of Columbia. That, too, was to be pushed with all vigor, but the months roll by and nothing whatever happens. Is the Department afraid to try the Senator again after his triumphant acquittal, or is it deliberately and maliciously seeking to keep this indictment hanging over Senator Wheeler—merely to annoy him, and, if possible, to keep him quiet? Now that it has officially approved of some of his witnesses and testified to the worth of his services, it ought in common decency to act or to have the indictment quashed.

HOLDING A BEAR BY THE TAIL is a pleasant pastime compared with trying Colonel William Mitchell by army court-martial. That energetic officer and his able counsel carried off all the honors in the first week of the trial. They challenged three generals who were conspicuously disqualified because of one reason or another. General Albert J. Bowley, for instance, had publicly attacked and abused Colonel Mitchell in a speech in North Carolina and then proposed to sit as a judge over him—a pleasant way to pack a court! Next the defense compelled the court to admit that War Department officials had been so eager to try Colonel Mitchell that they had breached their own regulations by the lawless manner of doing it—they who are accusing Colonel Mitchell of violating regulations! To protect themselves they declared that the court was ordered by Mr. Coolidge and that the President was in this matter a law unto himself. Whereupon Colonel Mitchell's counsel chilled the hearts of the court by hinting that they might call the President to face Colonel Mitchell as his accuser—how "Cal" must have wriggled at the prospect! It is now plain that the familiar and inevitable army stupidity has placed the prosecution in a bad hole. If the court convicts Colonel Mitchell, it will make a martyr of him. When dismissed he will stump the country and be more aggressive than ever. If it acquits the Colonel, he will continue to talk. How the powers that be in the War Department must be kicking themselves that they did not ask Mr. Coolidge to issue a sharp presidential reprimand and station the Colonel in the remotest parts of Moro-land!

IT IS SIGNIFICANT of the realignment of world politics since the Treaty of Versailles that the important happenings of 1925 have taken place in the Near and Far East, mostly manifestations of the rising spirit of independence and resentment against exploitation by Western imperialism. Growing difficulties in India, violent disturbances in China, the fighting in Morocco (westernmost frontier of the Orient), the clash between Greece and Bulgaria, the deposing of the Shah of Persia, and the warfare in Syria, culminating in the bombardment of Damascus by the French—these are not the minor events which complacent Occidentals largely assume them to be; they are the harbingers of vast world changes which may even destroy or cast into the background the whole fabric of Western civilization. The campaign of the French in Syria has already achieved the proportions of an international tragedy. The French, it must be recalled, have no territorial rights in Syria whatever. They are there as trustees of the League of Nations and have outrageously violated their trust, having shown none of the tact in dealing with non-European races that they have often manifested elsewhere. It is not enough to recall General Sarrail. The mandate ought to be taken away unless France voluntarily surrenders it. There seems to be considerable sentiment in France for such a step, but as usual the bogy of "national prestige" raises itself. The League of Nations could in no way so justify and magnify itself as by exerting compelling influence or taking summary action in this regard.

THE LIBERAL DEFEAT in Canada will surprise no one who has followed the Mackenzie King government, with its compromises, its shifts, and its lack of clear-cut definite policies on the migration and immigration problems, the tariff, the railroads, and taxation. Canada has been prosperous of late—at least the Liberals pointed to the development of its basic industries, its fine wheat crop, and its favorable trade balances as proof that they were conducting the country well. But the half-hearted liberalism of their government has had the inevitable result—many Liberals have preferred undiluted Conservatism. As a result, Mackenzie King and seven of his ministers are defeated, one-fifth of his strength is lost, and the Parliament-to-be is a chaotic one, comprising (as present returns indicate) 116 Conservatives, 100 Liberals, 23 Progressives, and 3 Independents, with 3 seats undecided. No party has a majority. It is, the dispatches report, a situation which has never before arisen in Canadian politics. Beyond doubt an effort will be made to govern for some time without again going to the country, but just how or by whom is not clear at this writing. The regrettable thing is that Mackenzie King has been destitute both of courage and true liberalism, or he would have challenged his adversaries on the nationalization of railroads and would have laid ruthless hands on the tariff.

PREMIER MUSSOLINI is no despot hiding his light under a bushel. Instead he stands up before an audience of thousands, he writes in cold print where it can forever be quoted against him, and what he says is true despot language: "I have always maintained that violence should be timely and chivalrous . . . violence should be exclusively in behalf of the state. Private, individual, and sporadic violence is harmful to Fascism." "Discipline must . . . be substantial and absolute, almost religious. The workers must be taught that their duties are more important than their rights." "The last century was the century of our dependence; this century must be that of our power. . . . Every one of you must consider himself a soldier, a molecule, feeling and pulsating with the entire organism." This is at least refreshing. Despot Mussolini knows what he wants and how he means to get it. And so far he has been eminently successful. From the day, three years ago, when ten thousand men marched unchallenged through the gates of Rome and were met by the King on the steps of the Palace to now, when political opposition is practically crushed, the press is silenced, the labor unions are bound hand and foot, and even local government is in the hands of the central power, resistance to Fascismo has been getting feebler and feebler. If a country has the kind of government it deserves, Italy's crimes must be heavy; if it has the kind it wants or understands, as some of Italy's best friends maintain, then time will remedy matters. Mussolini is a fine maker of phrases but occasionally his reasoning is unsound. "Ministries pass," he says, "but a regime born of revolution realizes all its conquests." He forgot to add that it is built on the flimsiest and least enduring of foundations.

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SO JUDSON C. WELLIVER, veteran journalist, has resigned and the position of chief clerk of the White House is again vacant. Now, let no man shy at this title. Here is no ushership of the Black Rod and no Beef-Eater sinecure, but one of the mightiest positions, we surmise, in the gift of the President. No regulations define the duties of the position; its functions are recorded neither in Bryce nor in De Tocqueville nor in any other commentator upon our government. But rumor and gossip have had much to say about it and the years have crystallized some of the guesses that from this official's desk come, for the President to sign, something more than graceful and well-drafted replies to myriads of letters which no President could find time to read. There are those wiseacres who actually believe that in the style of certain Harding and Coolidge speeches that thrilled the country by their erudition, their eloquence, and their godliness were traces of a once well-known newspaper manner. As to that we are in no position to judge, save only that the stylists on our staff have noted in the outpourings of both the last administrations certain variations of the presidential style and certain resemblances of text. Doubtless something in the spell of office, in tradition and precedent, in procedure and atmosphere, makes for weasel words and for the phraseology of uplift and service, not to say bunkum. Perhaps one cannot sleep in the bed wherein reposed Roosevelt and Wilson and Harding without unconsciously absorbing some of their pet words. For even a President the English language is circumscribed; and as for a chief clerk of the White House—but we forbear to speculate. We are merely betting dollars to dimes that Judson C. Welliver's successor will be a journalist who knows how to write.

WHATEVER ELSE CONGRESS does this year it should reduce the number of army officers. Never outside of Mexico was there such an over-officered army as ours. With only 132,000 authorized enlisted men we have 12,000 officers, no less than 470 of whom are colonels. There are so many to be placed in worth-while jobs that the War Department is able to waste 745 on teaching the rudiments of military drill to high-school and college boys—a bit of militaristic folly of which the Germans were never guilty in peace time. Hundreds of others are on detached or militia duty and still others are assigned to battalions and companies that muster only a corporal's guard. Unquestionably Congress will be told that the disproportion in officers is due in considerable part to the number of flyers and the necessity of training military reserves, civilians taking courses at the summer camps, etc. It should not be misled. A surplus of officers makes for inefficiency, not efficiency; barring a certain reasonable percentage, all officers should be serving in necessary staff positions or with troops. If there are not troops enough to go around there should be fewer officers. Millions can still be cut out of the army budget without real injury to efficiency. As for the argument that we must have many reserve officers for the event of war, that could be held as well to justify not 12,000 but 20,000 commissions.

OUR COMPLIMENTS to the Springfield *Republican*. Living up to its fine journalistic traditions it has declined to take part in the conspiracy of silence entered into by the Boston daily newspapers in regard to some strange happenings in Keith's Theater in that city—Keith's Theater, for years Boston's leading vaudeville house, which advertises so regularly in the dailies. But the *Republican's* Boston correspondent shall tell the tale himself:

> One of the most amazing instances of news suppression that has ever occurred in Boston came to light this week, with the detention of the man who for more than ten weeks has been throwing missiles in a crowded (Keith's) Boston theater, and at practically every performance. For more than a month the facts have been common knowledge in every Boston newspaper office, yet not a single paper had the courage to print the facts. Instead, innocent persons were permitted to attend every performance, with the practical certainty that a deadly missile would be thrown and the probability that some one would be hit. Many, in fact, have been hit, but happily none of the missiles has reached a vital spot, although several women have suffered painful injuries to their limbs.

Yet there are still journalists to declare that Upton Sinclair's strictures on the press were exaggerated and there are still innocent souls who believe that the Boston dailies are faithfully serving the city that supports them.

JOHN W. UNDERWOOD lived until his death in a two-room shack at May's Landing, New Jersey. In it he sold candy to the school children who passed his door. Saving his penny profits he invested in real estate, and when he died he left $100,000 to the school board with the injunction to "spend it so that the school children may enjoy the fruits of my labor." Now, the interesting thing is that Mr. Underwood was a colored man. Yet he left his money to white and colored alike, in marked contrast to a certain white millionaire who recently gave a great sum to found orphanages and said that no colored children should be admitted. There are colored people who will feel outraged that Mr. Underwood did not leave all his money to his own people; that is a reaction from the pressure of prejudice to which they are so wrongly subjected. The effect of our treatment of the colored race is to make them eager to advance themselves at the expense of any other group. We prefer the attitude of Mr. Underwood, candy-seller to school children. He knew whom he wished to help and he gave in complete forgetfulness that the great majority of them had a different color from his own.

TO BE A LANDLORD in these days of few houses and many tenants has great joys. Not only is there the financial harvest to reap; there is the pleasure of condescending toward the universe and of appealing a little more openly to the snobbish instincts of mankind than the vendors of almost any other kind of merchandise. In glancing at advertisements of apartments this autumn we realize as never before what a favor landlords are doing us in exchanging a year's use of three or four cramped, stuffy rooms for the price of a palace on the Grand Canal or a chateau in Touraine. We understand, too, that more than cash is necessary to deal with these modern landlords; we must go hat in hand prepared to justify all our past and present life in an inquiry more searching than that of Saint Peter. We note, for instance, that one apartment house calling itself the "de luxe city home" is the "utmost in exclusiveness," while another announces: "Permanent guests discreetly selected." But we are chiefly awed by "a distinguished residential apartment hotel with a pronounced cachet," where "inquiries for leases" are "now given consideration," although "acceptable social and business references" are "essential."

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Mr. Gary Prophesies Prosperity

ELBERT H. GARY has made a speech to the Iron and Steel Institute and—incredible as it seems—he has prophesied prosperity, precious, permanent, proletarian, and princely prosperity, for one and for all. Said he: "I tell you, gentlemen, we are on the verge of a great era of prosperity. Before another meeting of this institute . . . you will be turning down orders. The country is all right."

Steel is the barometer of prosperity, and Gary is steel's prophet. But as we read and reread these stirring remarks a dim remembrance forced itself upon us that once upon a time this prophet had said something of the same kind. Turning to the New York *Times*, we found that memory had not played us false. There on January 26, 1921, a great headline stared us in the face: "Gary Predicts Business Revival." "Improvement in business conditions in the near future was predicted yesterday by Judge E. H. Gary," we read. By May 28, 1921, he was able to report that business improvement had come "but the rate is slow." Indeed, it was so slow that the July report of his United States Steel Corporation showed the lowest net earnings for any quarter of a year since 1915. None the less, Mr. Gary declared: "We need not shout in triumph, but we are not compelled to feel despondent." By November 19 of the same year he had got back to his old confident note. "Gary Says Great Prosperity Near." He expected "a return to large prosperity in the comparatively near future."

On March 24, 1922, the headline assured us: "Gary Says Business Now Trends Upward." And on May 14 these were his ringing words: "Lasting business based upon sound principles and investment is not far distant." Within two weeks thereafter came the good news that the "era [of] prosperity [is] near us, says Gary." Even on July 25 he was a "strong optimist and altogether hopeful of the future," perhaps because the quarterly net earnings of his corporation had risen from $21,000,000 to $27,000,000.

The country hearkened. So on October 14 came this paean: "Confidence is restored . . . at the present time this country has a better chance for business prosperity than in all its history." By October 28 the country learned from Mr. Gary that "Great Prosperity Is Near." And on December 11, reviewing the prospects for 1923, Mr. Gary declared with all his old firmness and confidence: "If we do not have prosperity this year it will be because of agitation and laws." But somehow or other 1923 failed to react to the magic wand, and so, on September 14 of that year, the prophet threw himself into the breach and "denied that there was a slump." "There is nothing in sight to indicate a serious depression in business in the near future." By October 26 Mr. Gary had once more espied his old friend Prosperity on the horizon. "Prosperity Ahead," he announced. "Let us have faith in the future and do our part, proceeding . . . toward the goal of the prosperity which we know is ahead and which will be greater than ever before." What more natural than in the following December this dauntless optimist should declare that the "outlook for 1924 is good"? "The day of prosperity in the United States cannot easily be restrained," he asserted. Specifying more exactly, Mr. Gary also declared: "There will be success for those who proceed with good judgment, extending and progressing carefully within the limits of their resources"—a sentiment with which we fancy a majority of our fellow-citizens could safely agree. On January 30, 1924, the country was reassured again. Said Mr. Gary: "The business situation looks bright to me." He felt absolutely confident that "business would continue in a sound position if permitted to pursue its own course." Business evidently was allowed to follow its nose in accordance with Mr. Gary's desire, for on April 30 the good news came that "steel earnings were at a new high mark." Mr. Gary was certain that the tide of prosperity would reach its peak around election-time and he thrilled the country by declaring that "God Almighty gave this country its vast resources and opportunities. Nothing can take those possessions away except God Almighty or our own stupidity."

But God Almighty evidently did not respond quite as well as Mr. Gary had hoped, for on July 31 we find him saying: "Nothing that is reasonable and sound and honest can prevent a *fair* volume of business in this country." On October 29 he was certain that we should have "a wise administration at Washington, a competent and fair-minded Congress, a satisfactory volume of business prosperity."

By December 18 he was on his job again. "Judge Gary predicts a prosperous year." "Industry has turned the corner," he opined; "great business awaits the country in 1925. If it does not materialize it will not be because of lack of conditions or opportunity." Next the judge started the New Year well. On New Year's Day the *Times* announced that "Gary Is Optimistic." Strangely enough he was, and he was also in a grateful mood. "In view of the extraordinary opportunities offered those who are fortunate enough to be inhabitants [of the United States] every individual should . . . give thanks for a kind and merciful providence."

The height of far-sighted prophecy was, however, touched by Judge Gary on April 8 of this year. In his usual clear-cut, daring, straightforward, and unqualified form of statement he gave voice to this memorable utterance, quite without parallel in the history of prophecy:

> The fundamental conditions of the country at the present time are the best in its history. . . . If the crops this year are as good as they now seem to me to promise; if we have no special session of Congress, and if when Congress does convene there seems to be a disposition to get together and to act together, considering only the best interests of the country; if our banks are reasonably conservative and keep the rates of interest where the volume permits—that is, reasonably low, as now seems possible; if we have no epidemic of any kind in business or otherwise; if, in short, we take advantage of the opportunities for actual success, development, and progress, I believe next fall and through next winter we will have no reason to be frightened by the future. If the business men will keep their heads, if they will keep cool and refuse to be stampeded, if they will utilize the resources which are offered to them, we will have success—big success—in this country.

Fortunate steel industry! Fortunate country to have so wise and able a prophet! Without fear we prophesy that death alone will part Mr. Gary and Madame Prosperity.

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Trouble in France

CAILLAUX is out; Painlevé has formed a new Ministry in which he himself takes over the Finance portfolio; and the Left parties have adopted a resolution declaring that they will support only a "government resolved to demand from acquired wealth the sacrifices necessary for the relief of the financial situation of the country." The make-up of the new Cabinet indicates that it will endeavor to carry out that resolution, which is a cautious wording of the demand for a capital levy. So France at last stares bleakly at her own bankruptcy.

A capital levy is an emergency measure. It cannot be applied repeatedly; it is a surgical operation upon the national capital. Caillaux refused to consider it; but France, after years of shillyshallying, at last has a parliamentary majority which is ready to face the necessity for heroic action. Very likely there will be a near-revolution before a capital levy is actually carried out. Some of the financial interests which shout most loudly in war time lose their patriotism when faced with such a proposal. Switzerland, when a capital levy was under discussion, watched her rich men shift their capital to other countries as if a plague had struck the Alps. But some such step has become for France an inescapable necessity.

The franc, worth eighteen cents after the armistice, and well above five cents ever since the Morgan credit of the spring of 1924, has again sunk dangerously close to four cents; and unless some real remedy can be found it will sink lower still. The actual deficit—not the paper deficit—of the year 1924 was, according to the careful estimates of Mr. Harold G. Moulton of the Institute of Economics, approximately 16½ billions of francs. Such savings as Caillaux has been able to make have undoubtedly been wiped out by the added expenses of the wars which France has been waging in Syria and in Morocco. New internal borrowing has become almost impossibly expensive. French investors before the war were content with 3 per cent *rente*, but when in November, 1924, the French Treasury floated ten-year bonds with a nominal interest rate of 5 per cent, it had to sell them so cheaply that it was in fact paying close to 9 per cent interest on them. Caillaux's attempt to meet the oncoming floods of short-term obligations by offering to convert them into perpetual bonds with interest payable in gold francs was a failure. The French peasants did not jump at his magic bait, and there are 10 billion francs more of these short-term notes to be met on December 8. What can the Treasury do? The one answer that political-minded doctors can see is: Inflate! Issue more paper money; borrow more from the Bank of France! And then the value of the franc will fall again; the franc will follow the old chase after the worthless paper marks and rubles, and sooner or later France will again face, in the midst of worse disorder and chaos, the necessity for complete reorganization.

Something in the nature of a capital levy seems inevitable. It may come in the form of an attempt directly to tax all France's capital (the justest but most difficult form); it may come in the form of a fiat reduction of the interest charges on the public debt; or, conceivably, it may ultimately come as a repudiation of the debt itself. Failure to pay the inter-Allied debts is of course a form of repudiation, but of much less consequence to France's financial position than a failure to pay the domestic debt would be. For it is a curious fact that the great investing banks, little upset when a nation defaults on its nation-to-nation obligations, have conniption fits when loans made by bankers are not paid on the dot.

Senator Borah says France is prosperous. "John D. Rockefeller," he says, "could not pay his laundry bill if he spent all his money in yachts and wines and hunting lodges." And he points to the facts that France since the war has maintained an active army of from 700,000 to a million men, with a reserve force of 4,500,000; that she has more airplanes than Great Britain, the United States, and Japan combined; that she now has 200,000 men fighting to subjugate the Riffians and the Syrians; and that she has made military loans to her lesser European allies. All that is true. It inevitably enters into the mind of any intelligent American considering the question of the inter-Allied debts. But the amazing fact is that if France wiped out her entire military budget she would not be financially on her feet. *Eighty per cent of her entire revenue from taxation*—and she has enormously increased her taxes since the war—goes *to pay interest on her public debt.* If she scrapped her entire army she would still have a deficit of nearly ten billion francs.

Her inescapable problem, then, is to reduce the public debt. And if she is to do that it will have to be by sacrifices on the part of her men of wealth. The Left parties justly demand that men of wealth be forced to make sacrifices. If they refuse, if they use the conservative Senate as a fortress from which to fight any effort to make them sacrifice, they will only be calling on the deluge. No country is revolution-proof when its rich men refuse to heed the writing on the wall.

An American Paradox

MR. BURNS MANTLE undertakes each fall to issue an anthology which contains in somewhat abbreviated form the text of the ten best plays of the previous theatrical season in New York. In the preface to the latest volume, just issued, he announces with some jubilance that for the first time during the six years that he has performed his self-appointed task he can find it in his conscience to name ten American plays as the best ten, and there seems, indeed, no good reason to quarrel with his judgment. If we consider, as we have a right to do, that such established plays as "The Wild Duck" and "Candida," to say nothing of "The Way of the World" and "Love for Love," are *hors concours*, then Mr. Mantle's main contention is indisputable. Ten is rather a large number; half of his list is composed of the titles of works whose modest merits make the question of their relative superiority to certain imported pieces of comparable excellence not worth discussion, and the omission of "Processional" is unfortunate; but that five—"What Price Glory," "They Knew What They Wanted," "Desire Under the Elms," "The Firebrand," and "Wild Birds"—are better than any play newly imported from England or the Continent will readily be granted by nearly every student of the New York stage.

Now, this fact is a phenomenon. For the first time in the history of the American theater the native playwright has supplied it with its most interesting works. But there is another phenomenon equally interesting by no means so surely a cause for jubilation. Of the five play-

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wrights who contributed the five indisputably best plays only one had previously written with conspicuous success for the stage and thus only one has shown that he can be called a distinguished dramatist rather than merely the author of one distinguished play. Eugene O'Neill is no mere comet; he at least is a star sufficiently fixed to be sure of some sort of place in the history of the American drama. But there is no certain reason for believing that the authors of the other four may not disappear as many other meteors and comets have disappeared from our literary firmament, leaving us to scan the skies again and to acclaim new discoveries with new hope.

This fact is the paradox of our contemporary literature and it is observable in the fields of poetry and fiction as well as of the drama. In any given year American books seem as a whole to compare favorably with those which Europe sends us, but our writers build no reputations comparable to those of their transatlantic fellows. We are rich in novels but not in novelists, in poems but not in poets, in plays but not in playwrights. We may rejoice in last year's theatrical season and we may have good reason to suspect that no other country in the world produced so much good work, but before the skeptical Englishman who asks "Where is your Shaw, your Maugham, or your Barrie?" we must remain in embarrassed silence, for we know that they are not.

Our skeptical Englishman draws his own conclusions. We are, he says, a nation of enthusiasts and we are so eager for heroes that we make them overnight. We set up the exultant cry "A genius at last!" and then, next year, we find him out. Nor is this Englishman entirely wrong. There probably never was a time or place where it was as easy to get a book published or a play produced as it is in the United States today, and certainly the young aspirant to literary honors was never so promptly crowned and so eagerly acclaimed. Writers leap into fame and disappear into obscurity within a period of time less than that which served Shaw for his obscure apprenticeship, and reputations are apparently consolidated before they are submitted to any real test.

The situation has another aspect. Literary interest and literary talent are extraordinarily diffused in America. Nearly everybody can read, nearly everybody can write, and, as a result, almost anyone with anything to say is sure of a hearing. Perhaps he is even sure of more success than he deserves and, perhaps, he is thus exposed to the danger of never being compelled to do the best of which he is capable. But our experiment in hospitality is at least a new experiment and it seems to be justified by its fruits.

No world figure has emerged, but none, we suspect, has been actually killed with kindness, and we have at least received from each what he had to give. Five good plays, five genuine contributions to a living theater, represent an achievement worthy of respect even if we must, as it were, glean them here and there and consider them as the produce of a general movement rather than as a proof that any outstanding genius has appeared. We are laying a broad foundation. Every year a large company, not ill endowed, sets out in quest of fame, and the prizes are many. It is not easy to discover in the eager melee the man supremely endowed, and perhaps, indeed, he has not yet appeared. Yet it is surely in the midst of just such a company that he may, sooner or later, be expected.

A Clipper Ship's End

THE newspapers have been telling us that the last of our wooden clipper ships has made her final voyage. After bringing a cargo of lumber from Puget Sound, by way of the Panama Canal, the Benjamin F. Packard has been left in idleness until a tug shall throw a hawser impudently around her capstan and drag her ignominiously away to the scrap-heap. Unless—unless, perhaps, some plan to save her shall come to a head first.

Of course one is bound to squint pretty hard at the phrase "the last wooden clipper ship." We surmise that something of the sort is likely to furnish the newspapers good sentimental stories for a number of years to come. We well recall, for instance, "the last horse car in New York City." It took its "last trip" ten or a dozen times in as many years. Somebody was always discovering a final last horse car about to make its authentic farewell trip, and even today we should not be surprised to find some morning beside the coffee and rolls an announcement that an extra final last horse car was preparing for its positively authentic farewell trip.

So it is likely to be with the square-rigged sailing ship. We have been singing its swan song for a quarter of a century, but even today one can hardly take the ferry from the Battery to Staten Island without seeing a square-rigger at anchor somewhere in upper New York Bay. Of course there are square-riggers and square-riggers. The more careful newspaper historians have been at pains to describe the Benjamin F. Packard as the last *American wooden full-rigged* ship. This is important because during the final years in which the world was still building square-rigged sailing vessels most of them were constructed in England, almost all of them were made with iron instead of wooden hulls, and for the greater part they were barques rather than full-rigged ships. So it happens that the square-riggers one sees afloat today are usually iron barques or barquentines, and fly a foreign flag.

A good many years ago, when square-riggers began to prove unprofitable for Americans to operate, many of our vessels were sold to Scandinavians, and it is possible that there are still American-built, wooden, full-rigged ships under the flag of Norway, Sweden, or Denmark. But members of the Neptune Association—New York City's organization of masters and pilots—seem to agree with the newspaper reporters that the Packard is the last wooden full-rigged ship under the Stars and Stripes.

The exact sequence of the Packard in the long wake of glory which American clipper ships left on the Seven Seas doesn't matter greatly. What is more important is that this vessel, although built in 1883, is almost as sound and seaworthy as when she left the shipyard at Camden, Maine. Her captain said upon arrival in New York harbor that he had not had to man the pumps once since leaving Panama. And whether she is the last of her kind or not, she probably represents the final opportunity for some yachting or other nautical organization to acquire in good condition one of these historic vessels and preserve it intact as a clubhouse. A group of men in the New York Maritime Exchange has such a plan under advisement.

What a place for spinning salty yarns the roomy old cabin would make! What a reminder of American sea history her rugged hull and towering spars would be!

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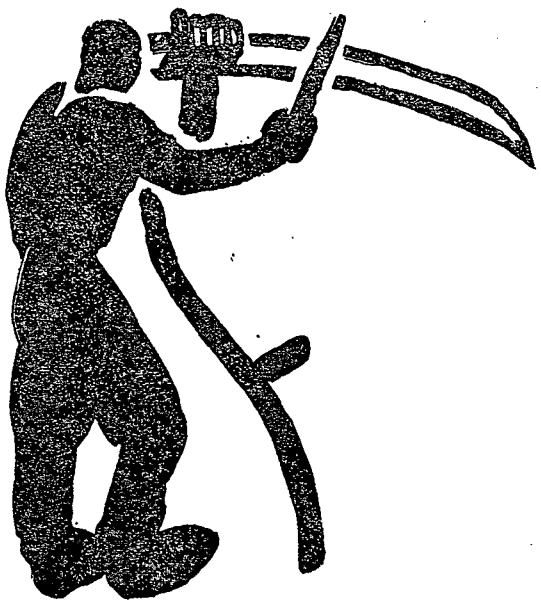
At a Peasant Soviet

By MAURICE G. HINDUS

HE was an uncommonly handsome youth, of not more than twenty-five, short, wiry, agile, with a round blond head, a mobile face, snapping blue eyes, shrewd, good-humored, and overhung by heavy light-brown brows. Himself a peasant, he was dressed simply enough in a faded black blouse with big coarse patches under the arms and in large boots with the freshly applied grease sparkling in little pools in the folds of the leggings. He looked more like a college athlete fit for the football squad than chairman of a village Soviet in Russia, and seemed dismally out of place in the stuffy little corner room where he had his office with its paper-littered floor, its fly-festered windows, its wabbly old table strewn with heaps of documents, and the crowds of peasants coming daily to unload their burdens before him.

For several days I had been a visitor at his office studiously observing the streams of humanity, ragged, smelly, hardy men and women from the surrounding countryside passing in and out of its portals. Did a man steal apples from his neighbor? Was a son neglectful of his aged father or mother? Did a mujik beat his wife? Did a boy wrong a girl? Did a girl object to marrying the man her father had chosen for her as a husband? Did a peasant discover a neighbor's cow or pig in his garden or potato field? Was he too poor to pay his tax; or was he without a horse, a plow, a wagon? They all came to him for counsel and aid, and they recited their grievances with the earnestness, simplicity, pathos which distinguish the speech of the Russian peasant and which make him one of the most affecting talkers in the world.



One day an old woman came dressed in mud-soaked bark-sandals and a tattered jacket, the pockets of which were stuffed with black bread and apples. She was leaning on a tall cane, as bent and battered as she was herself with her humped back, her swollen eyelids, her unwashed face, and her toothless mouth. Timidly and with trembling hands she pulled out of her bony bosom a roll of yellow papers and laid it before the youthful chairman of the Soviet.

"You have no idea, my beloved," she pleaded, nodding her head in sorrow, "how unfortunate I am, so old, so crippled in body, so abandoned. Do sign these papers."

He unwound the various sheets, hurriedly ran his eyes over them, then rolled them together again, fastened the string about the roll, and returned it to her. "Listen, little grandmother," he said gently, addressing her in the parlance of the mujik, "why don't you do as I have told you to? What is the use of coming before me again, if you fail to follow my advice?"

"Ah, dearest," she supplicated, "don't refuse me the favor this time, please don't. It is my land the brute is on, and if I do not get him off soon, the summer will pass, the fall will follow, I shall have no rye seeded and no wheat, and I shall have nothing to harvest, not a single stalk of grain, and I shall be without bread, yes, beloved, without a mouthful of food, like an old cow without a master."

"But," he replied impatiently, "if you do not take the case to the land court and bring witnesses and have a proper hearing as I have advised you, you'll never do any seeding. Can't you see that?"

"Again you tell me witnesses," she burst out in wrathful despair, "when I have told you that nobody wants to testify in my behalf. They are afraid of that brute; he is rich, has loads of hay and rye and wheat and oats, and they are afraid to displease him, this brother-in-law of mine, lest he refuse to make loans to them, and besides, of what good are witnesses? He is on my land, and if you sign these papers I can drive him off like a pig that's dug his way into a garden."

He frowned and shook his head in refusal. "I cannot do it, I cannot sign your papers, I have no right to, it is against the law. Do you understand, little grandmother?" he protested with weary exasperation in his voice.

"But what's the law got to do with it? O, my God!" she wrung her hands in dismay, "how can the law keep me from chasing him off my land? How? And *it is* my land, soaked in my sweat, in my blood, in mine and in my deceased Peter's."

The chairman turned to me with a bitter smile on his lips, like a man whose patience was at an end and who struggled desperately to keep from bursting into wrath. I was moved to pity for him, so youthful, so earnest, so tormented with impossible petitions; and even more for her, an illiterate, battered, broken-hearted woman, with no conception of the meaning of the law, thinking of life and the world, like most mujiks of the older generation, in terms of immediate needs, the gratification of which depended upon the whim or will of the individual official.

"Please," she pleaded again, advancing a step nearer and holding out to him the roll of papers, "please, beloved, sign them—master chairman."

At the mention of the word master he straightened up in his seat with a start and scowled at her. "What? 'Master chairman'?" he growled. "And what sort of a master am I to you? Don't you know that we have driven all the masters out of the land? Don't you know that we have no more masters in our Soviet Republic, that now we are all only *tovarishchi* (comrades)?"

His loud voice cowed her, and, shriveled as she was, she

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curled up even more, like a cat in the face of an enemy, and as she stood there humped up, leaning on her twisted cane with her head dropped low, she was to me a symbol of self-abasement, the self-abasement of the mujik, this ageless and deathless sphinx, who has survived slaveries, invasions, monarchies, revolutions, plagues, and famines; who is so simple, so humble, yet so shrewd, so untamed, so tantalizing, and so likable, and who now and for years to come will constitute Russia's chief burden and chief sorrow, whatever the government that is in power.

"How should I know?" she apologized meekly, "what is the right or the wrong way of addressing you? A worthless old fool I am, dark and ignorant, in *lapti* (bark-sandals) that leak, and in rags that protect neither from rain nor wind, a poor creature whom even a learned man like you disdains to rescue from the evil spirits that toss her around like a piece of carrion. . . ."

"There is no use imploring me," he replied, "to sign your papers. I cannot do it."

"What do you mean you cannot?" she protested. "A literate, learned man you are and not a dark-minded fool like me, and here is a pen and ink on your table, and here are the papers. Just sign them and save me from ruin, and I shall always think of you in kindness and good-will, and I shall always speak well of you and praise you to all people, aye, and the good Lord will bless you."

She paused and waited, but he made no reply. "Please, beloved," she resumed meekly, "please master, beloved master," and as he raised his eyes toward her she checked herself instantly and apologized profusely. "*Nu*, let it be comrade chairman. It is all the same to me, comrade, master, if you only sign my papers."

He shifted uneasily in his seat and frowned. "I am sorry, little grandmother. I cannot violate laws. If I do, I'll be put in jail. You are only wasting time here, your own and mine. Come with your witnesses any day, and the land court will give you a hearing, and if your witnesses refuse to come, let me know, and I'll bring them here, even if I have to send the militia after them. But I personally can do nothing for you. Do you understand?" and after a brief pause he added, "Please!" and motioned for her to step aside and make room for the barefooted mujik with the long russet beard who stood patiently waiting for his turn.

She did not stir from her place. The roll of papers dropped from her hands, and as she stooped down to pick it up she began to sob, quietly, convulsively. He begged her to cease sobbing, but she only shrugged her shoulders and wiped her eyes with her red bony fingers. The other peasants in the room and in the vestibule crowded close and gazed at her with uplifted faces and whispered solemn words to one another. The chairman motioned to the bearded man to draw closer, and as he was moving around her so as to come face to face with the chairman she swiftly and wildly elbowed him out of the way, leaped a step forward, and in the next instant she was on her knees, wailing piteously and reaching out for the chairman's hand to kiss it—as peasants have been accustomed to doing since days immemorial.

Hardly had she touched her lips to his hand, when he jerked it back, and sprang to his feet, pale, infuriated, like an animal threatened with attack. He gazed at her in terror and wrath. "Rise, little grandmother," he thundered imperiously. But she remained lying prone on the floor, a huddle of flesh and bones quivering with despair.

"Rise, I tell you," he shouted again. "Rise, little grandmother, rise at once. Slowly she clambered to her feet, choking with sobs and rubbing her eyes with her soiled sleeves. He shook his head at her in silent reproof, and then leaped upon the little backless bench near his desk and turned to the mob of peasants that had gathered there.

"Listen, mujiks, listen, *tovarishchi*," he began, pointing a stern forefinger at them. "When are you going to cease enacting such shameful scenes? When are you going to learn that the Czar is no longer in power, that the landlords are no longer ruling you? When are you going to learn that you are no longer serfs? When are you going to learn you are men and women and not dogs who have to lick the hands of their masters? When are you, dark mujiks, going to cease disgracing yourselves? O, shame on you! You come here and cringe before me and want to kiss my hand and get down on your knees and speak endearing words to me, yes, and bring me bribes, butter and pork and eggs and even home-made vodka, which you are not allowed to make, thinking that you can flatter me into doing favors for you in violation of the law of the Soviets and the honor of the Revolution. O, you silly and ignorant and impossible mujiks! Do you think that your obeisance flatters me? Do you think that your bribes can turn me traitor? Don't you know that we, revolutionaries, despise such homage? What was this Revolution for—tell me—what was it for, if not to set you free and to make you feel that you are the equal of everybody? When will you learn that you are no longer to bow or kneel before anyone or kiss the hand of any human being? When will you learn to be men, proud and brave and self-reliant? When will you learn that I and my associates in this Soviet are here to talk to you, to help you, to serve you, and if necessary to discipline and punish you, but never, never, to receive homage from you, never, never to receive gifts from you? Don't you know that we are mujiks like yourselves? Why can't you be honest with us? Why do you persist in acting as though you belonged to one race and we to another, as though we were here merely for the purpose of inflicting hardship and pain upon you? Why do you persist in exposing so openly and shamelessly your slavish souls?"

He paused as though for a reply. But none came. Not a voice rose in response or comment. They stared at him, those hardy peasants, with wide-open eyes and drawn faces as though craving further admonition. Presently he dismounted from the bench, went back to his seat, and quietly resumed his hearings.

To me it seemed that I was not in the office of a Soviet, of a government institution, but in a classroom, or rather in a kindergarten, a new and significant kindergarten for grown men and women. Communism. World Revolution. How frightened the world is of these words. What wrath and terror they have stirred, and what hate. I was scarcely aware of their existence or their meaning as I sat there in the crowded village Soviet, in that extraordinary kindergarten tucked away in the fat mudlands of Central Russia. For there, far from railroads and from the hubbub of civilization, I heard revolutionaries teaching peasants not the creed of communism, not the gospel of world revolution, but a more prosaic and elementary message—the need and the glory of self-respect.

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An Experiment in Freedom

By WILLIAM RESWICK

FOR years Dzerjinsky, former head of the Cheka, has been pictured abroad as the living and palpable terror of the Revolution, who stops before nothing to crush the faintest resistance to the Soviet regime. In Russia enemies of the Soviets tremble at the mere mention of his name, while communists and non-partisans, among them scientists, artists, and writers, who have had personal dealings with Dzerjinsky ridicule the very idea of his so-called cruelty, insisting rumor created an imaginary man-eater.

Dzerjinsky alone is silent, rarely speaks in public, and has never uttered a syllable on the subject. The commissar is known as Russia's hardest worker, his chief pastime being an occasional visit to his "baby" farm, an experiment in penal reform that has the attention of all Russia.

The experiment begun by Dzerjinsky, Yagoda, and Menjinsky, the latter two now actively directing the All Russian GPU (Government Political Bureau), is an attempt to turn some of the worst juvenile criminals in Russia into decent human beings with a sense of honor, duty, and responsibility. Some of the boys on whom the experiment is being tried have committed no less than ten murders each. All of them were burglars, thieves, opium fiends. What Dzerjinsky, Yagoda, and Menjinsky are trying to prove is that given a change of environment the worst of criminals, especially in his youth, may be made into a decent, useful member of society.

To prove their claim the three Commissaries went into the Buterki Prison and picked about fifty of the worst specimens in juvenile crime. The boys were taken to one of the fine estates in the suburbs of Moscow and were told that henceforth they were entirely free to stay on the estate or go wherever they pleased. Should they decide to remain they must make up their minds to learn a trade, to learn to read and write, and try to manage the place on an efficient basis so that in time they might make it a paying proposition and thus maintain themselves instead of being subsidized by the government. There was to be no police, no guards of any kind, no outside restrictions or discipline whatever, except such rules of conduct as the young men might formulate for themselves.

The only outsiders assigned to share the premises with the boys were a superintendent, formerly a director of schools under the Czar, and a staff of teachers, the understanding being that under no circumstances were they to impose their will upon or even mildly criticize the pupils. The criminals were advised to organize a sort of commune and elect their managing committees.

The experiment was started less than a year ago. About six months later I went to the colony accompanied by the superintendent and Braginsky, who has spent years in jail in close association with criminals and now acts as a sort of friend and adviser and does it quite skilfully by speaking to the boys in their own lingo.

We arrived at the estate about 4 p. m., shortly after the boys quit work and were out on the campus in groups, playing football. They were quite free in their manners and speech. Most of them appeared well fed, ruddy, broad-shouldered, and broad-chested; their eyes sparkled with health and vigor. It was difficult to believe that only a year or two ago these boys were murderers and ruffians.

Here, as everywhere else, Russian hospitality proved to be the invariable rule. Before we were shown anything, the youngsters took us to the kitchen and there had the cook—one of them—give us kasha, borsht, and roast beef. It was as wholesome and palatable a meal as one could hope to find anywhere in Russia. While we ate, exchanging compliments with our hosts, the word was passed to open the workshops. The boys cleared out in a jiffy and in less than ten minutes the colony lost the aspect of a boarding school. From various buildings came the buzz of whirling wheels, while in the distance we heard the rhythmic ring of blacksmiths' hammers striking steel.

A short walk across the yard brought us into a small but exceedingly well-appointed shoe shop. Here about fifteen youngsters were cutting, sewing, and finishing. The foreman, formerly a shoe operator in New York, told us with pride that the pupils are beginning to turn out some excellent work, and that the shop is no longer an experiment, as it was actually filling orders placed by various government concerns. We next visited a furniture plant with electric saws and all the rest of the paraphernalia of a modern furniture factory. This workshop was much larger than the shoe plant. Here about twenty-five boys worked as carpenters. From the furniture place we went into the blacksmith shop, where we found a slightly deaf, middle-aged blacksmith in a leather apron, watching four young giants blazing away at red-hot iron.

"These," whispered one of the escorts, "were all highwaymen and murderers with a record of killing people with their bare fists."

Our next stop was at the dairy, where we found about thirty cows and two bulls. Alongside the dairy was a stable with some fourteen horses and a number of wagons and sleighs. There was a stall full of hogs, a beehive, a fine poultry run, and a yard full of pigeons. All the property on the estate, factories, cows, horses, etc., the boys regard as their own, but life on the farm is not all work. The lads have their pleasures as well. They have their own orchestra, choir, classes, a dramatic circle, and a small theater with a miniature stage.

Dusk was coming on fast, and we made haste to get back to Moscow. As I sat in the car, shaking hands with the boys and bidding them goodby, I questioned some of them as to their political views. To my great surprise it appeared that only one in the crowd knew that May 1 was a revolutionary holiday, and even he did not know why or how. The rest of the boys simply knew that it was some sort of holiday but they were hazy as to whether it was a religious holiday or not. Braginsky explained that Dzerjinsky and his colleagues do not care to propagandize the youngsters, preferring to have them form their political views after they get on their feet mentally.

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Theater and Revolution

By MICHAEL GOLD

A WORLD exploded. Monuments of dogma scattered like leaves. Ponderous sanities—Money, Career, Comfort, Titles—spouted like sterile rocks from a volcano. Mountains danced the Carmagnole. The stars clanged out the Internationale. All seemed madness to old eyes.

Great days. Boys became men overnight, girls women. Intellectuals who had been sincere liberals for twenty-five years discovered suddenly that they hated the workers, and escaped the country, chattering. Old peasant women began wanting to know how to read and write. Socialists joined the Czarist forces. Former Czarist generals joined the Bolsheviks.

Young drudge-minded factory workers, accustomed to obeying the foreman and to crossing themselves when meeting a priest, cast off their fear of God and man and learned to think and command.

The world was upside down; the money-maker was a pariah and outlaw; the revolutionists became the pillars of society.

It was the Revolution—the end of everything—the beginning of everything. But Mr. Stanislavsky was not impressed.

All through the titan clamor of worlds crashing, the Moscow Art Theater went on playing its gentle, weary little play about sad, aimless little people, "The Cherry Orchard."

While the proletarian Apocalypse thundered, Mr. Stanislavsky, noted director, grieved because good laundresses were scarce in Moscow; his collars were not being starched properly. (At least so an interviewer reported: "Art Is Dead, Weakly Mutters Noted Director as He Presses Own Pants.")

And all over Russia, while art, Mr. Stanislavsky, and the world he represented were dead, the theater bloomed riotously like spring in a thousand fat valleys. In dark mujik villages, in typhus cities and famine provinces, the workers, soldiers, and peasants crowded to thousands of improvised theaters. They needed this. They discovered this. Stages on motor trucks, theaters in icy barns and stables, in union halls, in army barracks, streets, and dugouts. The first revolutionary plays were bold and crude propaganda, like poster art or oratory. They were meant to teach and inspire simple men; they were as naive and earnest as those medieval Christian miracle plays out of which Shakespeare ultimately flowered.

Reconstruction has come in Soviet Russia; the dark days are over and these workers' theaters are flourishing more than ever.

All over the land, in factories, villages, and wherever workers, soldiers, and peasants congregate, the neo-primitive stage flourishes and presents plays bearing such monotonous titles as Red Dawn, Red Earth, Death of a Red Soldier, The Red Star, The Red Wedding, Reds and Whites, Under the Red Flag, The Red Worker.

Titles for bourgeois intellectuals to smile at; so naive. But Red Dawn is a precise symbol of the present hour in Russia. Men must begin somewhere. These theaters of the red dawn are the baby-stammerings of a young giant class growing up into mastery of the world.

The Moscow Art Theater, against this background, seems like a museum where the past is reconstructed for one. The audience is the same audience—the stranded intelligentsia who could not grow with the Revolution. They sit in the classic theater with its gray, sea-gull curtains, and dream they are back in the lovely past, when all was so gray, mystic, and Czarist. The new business man is found there, too, with his wife, mopping up what for years he has been assured is the A 1 quality in the art market.

Other theaters, besides the Moscow Art, cater to this dwindling and incongruous audience. But the masses, the youth, the rising class of worker-intellectuals, soldier-intellectuals, peasant-intellectuals—these go elsewhere.

They are the new audience in Russia, and they have shaken the professional stage from top to bottom. They have let in a great blast of heroism and freedom. There are at least thirty popular experimental theaters in Moscow run on a professional basis that have adapted themselves to the new audience. These theaters have broken up the stiffness, the drawing-room stuffiness, the parliamentary talkiness of the old stage. Acrobatic actors race up and down a dozen planes of action. The drawing-room play has been thrown on the junk-pile of history. Things happen—broad, bold, physical things, as in the workers' lives. There are danger and the feel of elementals. Music and dancing and the circus have been brought back on the stage. Shots are fired—masses pour to and fro. Belly-laughter and high tragedy live side by side, as they did in the glorious plays of the Elizabethans. Satire and heroism—the silliness of the bourgeois world and the heroism of the proletarian world—these are the basic themes of the new stage. Longshoremen, factory workers in overalls, Red soldiers, athletes, clowns—these are some of the new figures that dance and shout there.

Machinery has been made a character in the drama. City rhythms, the blare of modernism, the iron shouts of industrialism, these are actors. Paradox is an honored guest at the feast. Vitality and youth and courage are the Three Graces. And futurism is the fantastic godmother of this swarm of new theaters in Russia; futurism, the cult of a few odd persons in New York. In Russia these futurist theaters are the popular theaters—the mob wants the best in art, the individualist clings to the old and shoddy. The young factory workers, young soldiers, and roughnecks whistle and cheer and enjoy themselves riotously with futurism.

Every theater has its own style in Moscow, the city I got to know best. There is a theater of improvisation; there is the Jewish Kamerny, a marvelous synthetic theater of music and comedy. There is the Prolet-Cult Theater, with its combination of circus and tragedy; the Children's Theater, and the opera companies that have revived the respectable corpse of Western opera and made it dance and laugh with new life. Machine-dance theaters; poets' theaters; peasant theaters; theaters of satire, science, revo-

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lution. And each is different: an experiment, fresh, audacious, startling.

And there are plays given by 40,000 proletarians in a city square. And gas-worker plays given at the gas factory, and other such experiments in mass-theater.

Meyerhold is the leader of the young Russian theater. His twenty-fifth anniversary in the theater was celebrated while I was in Moscow, and hundreds of thousands of workers demonstrated in his honor, as if he were a great general or political leader. Before the Revolution he was chief of the largest theater in Petrograd; but unlike the Cherry Orchard intellectuals he did not cry that art was dead and flee the country. He yielded himself body and mind to the great passion of revolution; and gained a new world. He had always been a restless inventor and experimenter, a conflagration of ideas; but the Revolution gave him the audience and the themes he had been blindly striving toward for so many years.

His bare, immense stage is stripped for action, like a steel mill or factory. The flat curtainists and decorative scene painters have been abolished from his stage, and architects have taken their place. Intricate structures, like huge machines created for a function, furnish the scaffolding on which actors race and leap and walk from plane to plane. All that was static in the old theater has been stamped out. This is the theater of dynamics; the moving picture is its avowed model. Drawing-room plays have no place here. This theater is the battle-field of life; it is a trench, a factory, the deck of a ship in storm. And the young workers and soldiers adore the futurist director, Meyerhold. He has influenced every theater in new Russia.

Red Russia is not only the world's laboratory in the forms of collective living; it is also a world laboratory in the arts and sciences. For the next decade young students from everywhere will be pouring there for new ideas as they went to Italy during the Renaissance.

Poems of Revolution

By VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY

Translated by Joseph Freeman and Leon Talmy

Our March

Beat on the street the march of rebellion,
Sweeping over the heads of the proud;
We, the flood of a second deluge,
Shall wash the world like a bursting cloud.

Days are a bright steed;
Years drag glum;
Our great god is—Speed!
Our heart a bellowing drum!

What is richer than our colors?
Can we be caught by the bullet's sting?
For rifles and bayonets we have ballads;
Our gold is our voices' ring!

Green meadows grow,
Days burst by—
Rainbow, curve your bow!
Hurrying horses, fly!

See the stars in heaven above us.
Our songs without their help will thrive:
Eh, the Great Bear is demanding
We be lifted to heaven alive!

Sing! Drink sweet!
Our veins flow Spring!
Beat, heart, beat!
Breast of brass, ring!

Decree to the Army of Art

They brag, the old men's brigades,
Of the same old wearisome goals.
Comrades,
To the barricades!

Barricades of hearts and souls.
He alone is a Communist true
Who burns the bridge for retreat,
Stop marching slowly, Futurists,
Into the future—leap!
Engines are easy to build,
Wind the wheels and they go—
But hurl your song like a bomb,
There's a railway depot to blow!
Pile up sound on sound,
March on
With whistle and song;
Loud ringing letters abound
To roll
Under
Your tongue.
Pants creased like a feather's edge—
That's the easy officer's way;
All the soviets won't budge the troops
Unless the musicians play.
Drag pianos into the street,
Let drums rend the air asunder,
Whether drums or pianos beat,
Let tumult be,
Let thunder!
What good to slave in a shop,
To soil your face and growl,
Why stare at the joy
Of others,
Flapping your eyes like an owl?
Enough of pennywise talk—
Wipe the old from the heart who dares!
The streets shall be our brushes,
Our palettes shall be the squares.
The thousand-paged Book of Time
Revolution's songs shall know:
Into the streets, Futurists,
Drummers and poets, go!

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What They Read in Soviet Russia

By LOUIS FISCHER

Moscow, October 4

SOVIET RUSSIA is busy devouring the printed word. There are more bookstores in Moscow's central business section than tonsorial parlors, shoe stores, lunch rooms, jewelry emporiums, men's furnishing shops, and watchmakers combined. And each time I return to the Red metropolis there are a few more. In Moscow alone 388 publishing houses work unceasingly to supply a never-saturated market; in Leningrad there are 171 more. The total for the entire country is probably near a thousand. Some are two-by-four establishments, many are much bigger, and one, the Gosisdat, or State Publishing Company, is among the largest in the world, its 1924 output having been 27,000,000 books.

Some of the Gosisdat's products enjoy fabulous circulation. Thus, during the last two years the nineteen volumes of Lenin's collected works have had a grand sale of 1,900,000 copies. A book or brochure from the pen of Trotzky invariably goes through a first edition of 30,000 to 40,000, and often through another of equal size. Bucharin, whose subjects are heavy problems of Marxian philosophy, is a best seller. In 1924 145,000 copies of his works were sold, in the first half of 1925 160,000. No writer of fiction can compete with him. He has outdistanced even Jack London, who, after a high wave of popularity in 1923 when the country quickly exhausted 10,000 editions of twenty of his titles, has now settled down to a more moderate demand.

According to the files of the Gosisdat which were opened to me, the average sale in 1924 of a book which comes under the rubric of belles lettres was 8,300, of a publication in the politico-economic class 19,000, of one on Soviet problems and current politics 21,000. Generally speaking, the character of the things read is what the Russians call "serious." For every book of fiction published there are, it is estimated, five which deal with economic, scientific, political, and social questions. Partly, this circumstance is explained by the nature of the publishing houses. One really cannot expect the Russian Communist Party or the Leningrad Soviet or the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, each of which has its own press, to print Victor Hugo or Tolstoi or even Seifulina to any great extent. But largely, the predominance of the serious is due to the unconstrained taste of the reading public.

Time was when the Bolsheviks attempted, in vain incidentally, to dictate the nation's reading ration. Early in the revolution, for instance, they printed five million copies of the "A B C of Communism" by Bucharin and Preobrazhensky, distributed these free of charge, and said in effect: "Swallow this first. Then we'll feed you some more." No vestige remains of such tactics. Now the variety of books is endless, and all are bought and paid for. More than that, they are read, they are worn and torn as they pass from hand to hand. Books whose sole purpose is the decoration of library tables do not exist. Ninety-nine per cent of the books printed in Soviet Russia have soft, paper covers, usually ugly. The others have hard, paper covers.

In 1924 13,500 titles were published in 109,900,000 copies which contained over 12 billion pages. It is very likely correct to say that these figures for all of 1924 were exceeded in the first half of the current year, for during January-July, 1925, 6,245 titles came from the presses of Moscow alone, and 3,070 from those of Leningrad. These data, by the by, originate with Glavlit, the Soviet institution which censors every syllable that appears in the land. Not a manuscript, be it from the hand of a Stalin or a Zinoviev, not a magazine or newspaper, be it even the official organ of the state or Communist Party, not a theater poster or advertising placard or old clothes man's throw-out may be printed without its special permission. The chief of this ubiquitous censoring machine tells me that in the course of 1924 not more than 126 manuscripts, or approximately 1.1 per cent of all submitted, were returned to their authors with a "Not Acceptable" slip attached. The Glavlit lies in ambush for the politically objectionable, the counter-revolutionary; it has nothing in common with vice crusaders or American movie censorship. But, especially to the persons affected, it is none the less hateful for that reason. The head of the Glavlit makes no secret of the fact that there is no "freedom of the word" in Soviet Russia. It is only out of the inconsistent goodness of their hearts that the authorities permit the Anarchists, Zionists, and Poale-Zionists to have their own little presses.

The hold which the Bolsheviks have on the book market is very strong and far-reaching; it is one of the most important political weapons they control. The largest publishers in the country are the State Publishing Company, the Russian Communist Party, the federal commissariats, the municipal soviets, the cooperatives, and the trade unions. No more than seven books in every hundred are issued by private publishing houses. But these are private merely to the extent that they are not official. A private publisher may be a group of individual Communists or a school of pro-Soviet poets.

By virtue of the censorship and of their almost perfect control of book production, the Bolsheviks have it within their power to direct the reading of the nation. But except in a few cases they are quite sensible to popular demand. Nor is there a ban upon the old masters. Early in 1923 the Gosisdat printed 15,000 copies of Dostoevsky's "Crime and Punishment." The records I have seen indicate that 9,000 copies are still in the warehouses, unsold. On the other hand, a 15,000 edition of "The House of the Dead"—which answers more to the interests of the times—was completely sold out. Half of a 1923 10,000 edition of Lermontov cannot be disposed of to this day, and editions of Belinsky, Uspensky, Goncharov, Krylov, Pushkin, and other classic authors which the Bolsheviks found time to publish in the worst and most fanatical years of military communism have met with a similar fate.

In this connection the statistics of a typical Moscow library which I visited the other day are illuminating. The readers who frequent the institution are in the "average citizen" class—students, women who keep house, some

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workers, private business men, officials, physicians, and intelligentzia. Two or three per cent are Communists. (The Communists have their own club and party libraries.) And these readers, most of whom may be grouped under the heading of "bourgeoisie," demand books by Lenin and on Leninism more than anything else.

To judge the tastes of the reading public we will use the ten-mark system. Leaving Lenin out of consideration, Jack London would receive a mark of ten. For every ten persons who ask for London there are ten who ask for Leo Tolstoi and ten for Gorki; eight for Korolenko and Chekov, seven for Nekrassov and Turgeniev, five for Dostoievsky, four for Gogol, and two for Pushkin—these two, according to the librarian in charge, being students who must read him for school. With respect to fiction by modern non-Russians, Upton Sinclair would be marked 8. (Sinclair's popularity is waning, says the librarian; "He does not meet the artistic requirements of the public"), Zola 7, Wells 6, O. Henry 6, and Rolland 4. Joseph Conrad, whom Russia knew before the revolution, benefited recently by a sudden boom, but has again faded from view. As to the new Russian authors, the distinctions would be: Erenburg 10, Seifulina and Alexei Tolstoi 8, and Pilniak 5.

In this predominantly non-Communist library, where Lenin outranks even Tolstoi and Jack London, Bucharin is marked 6 and Trotzky 5. It is the consensus of opinion among all persons consulted that while the general public is still reading more fiction than any other type of writing the curve of books on social and economic problems, and especially on matters dealing with international politics, is going rapidly up. The non-party mass is commencing to read and to buy more frankly communist literature. On the other hand, people note a tendency of Communists to seek relaxation in easy fiction. They are sadly overburdened with work, and tired. After sixteen hours a day of tense office activity and exacting party duties they cannot settle down to a treatise on values and profits or to a dissertation on the sinister motives of the Dawes Plan.

When we speak of the Russian reading public we mean the inhabitants of the cities. With the exception of a very thin stratum of peasant intelligentzia, the village never read. The average mujik may know Tolstoi as a heretic anathemized by the Greek Catholic Church, but hardly as a writer. The real beginning of a change was made in 1924, when the Gosisdat took the first cautious step. This year it will print 60,000,000 books for village consumption in very cheap five- or ten-kopeck editions. The experience of the peasant magazines and newspapers (unknown before 1917), whose subscription lists often mounted to 500,000 and more in a twelvemonth, has proved that the village wants to read. If this desire remains—it almost certainly will—and if the "liquidation" of illiteracy continues to make progress, it is not impossible that the book market will double or triple its capacity in the next half decade.

The Movies in Russia

By PAXTON HIBBEN

At the junction of Mineralne Voda, in the foothills of the Caucasus mountains, where only the station and a dozen low-lying buildings masquerade as a town, I made my way along the muddy road that passes as Main Street. There were, of course, no lights save the torch flares before wooden shacks where Kakhetian wine and Georgia watermelons were being sold. But half way down the street, the open door of the local club building invited me in. In one corner a table displayed the dozens of newspapers and magazines that seem, nowadays, to be the principal output of Soviet Russia. Around the walls, posters urged the starting of a thrift account. But the scores of young people gathered inside and outside of the modest building were interested in neither. They formed a long line at a ticket window just inside the door where for a quarter one could purchase the inestimable privilege of viewing one of the Great Films of All Time—Gloria Swanson in "Madame Sans Gêne."

In Rostov-on-Don, the public gardens and the Bolshai Sadovaya teemed with people as night came on. From cabarets and bars came the strange, oriental music of the Georgians. The gambling houses, frankly open on the principal boulevard, were scantily patronized; the crowd moved steadily toward a dozen spots where bright lights announced Tom Mix or Corinne Griffith or William Hart in the latest releases.

There are some 2,000 moving picture houses in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, as against 18,000 in the United States. Of this number, almost half are in one way or another connected with workers' clubs, thus paying a smaller profit than the commercial theaters. But there is not one that does not turn away a theaterful of patrons nightly, and only a handful that are not showing the products of Hollywood, unadulterated. The theory that American films by their subtle revelation of life in the dens of capitalism will debauch the younger generation of Communist ascetics has no practical effect. If there is anything in the way of extravagance, luxuriousness, revelry, or intemperance that is not to be seen on the silver screens of any Russian small town, it must be too bad for American consumption. For American films dominate, inundate, glut, overwhelm the Russian motion picture houses today. Clara Kimball Young has a theater devoted solely to her in Moscow. In the Arbat, center of the workers' quarters of the Russian capital, a new building celebrates the glory of Douglas Fairbanks in electric letters three feet high. In the leading workers' club and a dozen other places Mary Pickford holds forth. And so on throughout the list of American stars, from one end of Soviet Russia to the other.

It is a bit depressing. The Russians are the inheritors of a rare tradition of dramatic art. Since the revolution, the obscurest towns have organized their own theaters, and the drama has become not so much a national pastime as a national aspiration. But with meager equipment and no funds, native motion picture production has languished on the edge of the grave. What money the Soviet Government can lay its hands on goes to education and to such essential industries as transportation, coal and iron mining, textile manufacturing, and the purchase of agricultural machinery for the peasants. The Soviets have neither the free

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capital nor the free time to devote to building up the movies. All the Government has been able or willing to do, after several years of muddling along, has been to unite the various motion picture producing, distributing, and exhibiting companies that sprang up of themselves during the period when nobody gave motion pictures a serious thought, into one semi-official joint stock company in which the Soviet Government is majority stockholder—the Sovkino. And the Sovkino, once formed, was given a monopoly to manage the whole motion picture business, handed a large building in the Mali Gnezdnikovski for its offices, and told to run along and leave the Government in peace. If it wanted capital to refit or build the two or three thousand more theaters for which there is immediate demand, or to produce the 120 pictures that it is expected to provide for next year, or to buy up-to-date equipment for its studios—it might go abroad and get that capital.

The result was, naurally, that the dozen antique, ill-equipped motion picture studios which were expected to supply the whole of the Soviet Union with pictures could come nowhere near doing it. So the Sovkino was forced to go out into the market and buy foreign films—German, French, British, and, more than any others, American.

This is not by any means to say that the creation of motion pictures in Russia has halted, or is in any danger of halting. On the contrary, there have been three kinds of pictures produced right along during these years of stress: news reels, melodramas, and a few highly artistic productions. The news reels the Soviet Government needed in its business and consequently made provision for—not so much to show abroad (though some have been shown abroad and many certainly could be so shown) as to send about the country to acquaint the inhabitants of Kamchatka with what goes on in Bokhara, and vice versa. Factory workers are exhibited to peasants and coal miners to textile workers. Lenin's funeral, maneuvers of the Red Army, the work of the volunteer fleet, model farms using modern agricultural machinery, meetings of the Congress of the Soviet Union, and similar subjects are pictured in detail. All in all, pictures of this sort in Russia are much bolder and more living than our own news reels. For behind them lies the idea of the essential unity of those who, each in his own field, are creating the new Russia.

There is something of this same spirit in the melodramas as well. The revolution offers the most obvious and also the most fertile source of plot. There is, for example, that rousing melodrama, "Admiral Kolchak and the Gold Reserve," with a swaggering, drunken, knout-wielding hetman of cossacks as super-villain, and a fur-capped, fearless girl Communist as heroine. There are scenes of gambling orgies on the trans-Siberian train that served Kolchak as headquarters, and much Cossack riding across endless wastes of snow. But through the confusion of plot and incident there does somehow appear the fact that these leaderless, ill-armed peasants, with no service of supply in the dead of a Siberian winter, did not only survive against an organized military force backed by British, Japanese, and Americans, but in the end prevailed.

The truly artistic productions are of two widely different kinds, the older school represented by the Moscow Art Theater players, and the newer "revolutionary" school of the ultra-moderns. The former have given the screen some fine examples of that exquisite and painstaking work with which those who saw Moskvy play "Czar Feodor" in this country are familiar. Indeed, this same Moskvy and a group of fellow actors from the Moscow Art Theater have just completed Pushkin's "The Station Master," now showing throughout Russia. Except for the technique of lighting and the mechanical end of making the picture (of which the Russians know little or nothing) it is a highly creditable production. A similar though larger cast is to be employed shortly in creating a vast super-film from Tolstoy's "War and Peace." It is to be hoped that before so large an order is undertaken the Sovkino will arrange to send some of its technical staff to Hollywood for a few lessons.

But it is the ultra-moderns who, despite their technical handicaps, represent the most promising outlook for Russian motion picture production. Meyerhold, whose "The Path of Steel" is to cover the development of the steel industry and exhibit the titanic conflict of man with metal, is captain of a group of four directors chosen from among his own followers who are making this picture in the very mines and blast furnaces and rolling mills where the epic of steel has been enacted during the past quarter century. "The Path of Steel" will not be ready until 1926, but it is expected to embody the very soul of the new industrial order for which Russia stands.

In a sense, that is also the effect of Eisenstein's "Strike," which has already been shown throughout Russia. It is a powerful piece of work which, needless to say, will not be seen in the United States so long as the shade of Sam Gompers stalks labor circles. Eisenstein is a pupil of Meyerhold, and a modern of the moderns. At present he is engaged in filming a huge production to be called "1905." But its scope reaches far beyond Trotzky's book of the same title and covers the whole revolutionary movement in Russia from 1905 to the present.

Aside from the capital required, Russia is even now in far better position to work out a grandiose and above all a distinctive motion picture development than were we fifteen years ago, when industry in the United States was at much the same stage as is Russian industry today. The popular demand is far in excess of any supply that can conceivably be furnished from abroad with the limited resources at the command of the Sovkino. On the other hand, there are studios in operation in Moscow, Leningrad, Siberia, Odessa, Kiev, Tiflis, and Yalta—Yalta in that Crimea whose climate and beauty are calculated to drive the most ardent Southern Californian to blow out his brains, if any. There are actors who outrank any in the world, and collections of historic costumes, furniture, and stage settings unequalled anywhere. And, short of putting up funds, the Soviet Government will do anything to help, from turning out the Red Army to furnishing the Granovitaya Palace of the Kremlin as a stage. And above all, there is in Russia a feeling for dramatic art that will neither be degraded by the tawdry nor debauched by magnificence.

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Books*

By MAXIM GORKY

Translated by Alexander Kaun

WHATEVER humanely good there is in me, I owe to books, and it has long been my conviction that art is more magnanimous than men. I love books; I regard every book as a miracle, and the poet as a miracle worker. I cannot speak of books without the deepest emotion, without pathos. Perhaps this is laughable, but it is so. They may say that this is the pathos of a savage. Let them say it, but I am—incurable.

When I take into my hands a new book, a thing made in the printing shop by the labor of a little hero, the typesetter, and by the machine, created by another little hero, I feel that into my life enters something living, speaking, wonderful. Here is another holy writ by man about man, about a being beyond which the world has nothing finer, more puzzling, and more worthy of my love, a being whose toil and genius have made all that is great and beautiful on earth. The book takes me into life, and however familiar it be to me, the book always tells me something I have not known, I have not observed in man. At times the whole book contains only one new phase, but it is this that brings one mysteriously close to man, showing another smile or grimace of his.

The grandeur of the starry world above my head, the harmonious mechanics of the universe, so convincingly described by astronomers, leave me cold and unmoved. To me the universe appears not at all so splendid as astronomers have made it; to me there is more senseless chaos than divine harmony in the birth and death of worlds.

Lo, somewhere in the depth of the Milky Way, the sun has become extinguished, and a whole planetary system has sunk into darkness. I feel no regret. But the death of that magnificent phantast, Camille Flammarion, obviously grieves me.

Whatever we value as beautiful has been invented and told to us by man. Unhappily he infrequently invents suffering too, sharpening and intensifying it, as in the case of Dostoievsky, Baudelaire, Leopardi, and others. But even here I see only an effort to embellish and refine that which is oppressive and repellent in our life.

There is no beauty in hostile nature around us; man creates it out of his mind's tissue. It is the Finn who pours beauty into his marshes and woods, into his rusty granite sparsely overgrown with lichen. It is the Arab who has persuaded himself that the desert is lovely. Beauty springs out of man's desire to see it. One is struck not by the lumbering formlessness of a mountain landscape but by the beauty which man's imagination has instilled into it.

It is remarkable how easily and how generously man saturates nature with beauty, the more remarkable since the earth is, essentially, not a very cozy place to live in. One need only recall the earthquakes and hurricanes, snowstorms and floods, droughts and frosts, noxious insects and microbes, and a number of other things which would make life quite unbearable were man less heroic than he is.

Man's existence is thoroughly and inexhaustibly tragic, but man transforms life's innumerable tragedies into works of art. I cannot imagine anything more marvelous, more striking, than this transformation. That is why, in a book of verse by Pushkin or Heine, in a volume of Flaubert or Balzac, I find more beauty and wisdom than in the cold sheen of stars, in the mechanical movement of oceans, in the rustle of forests, and in the silence of deserts. Borodin has eloquently told us in one of his musical pieces about the silence of the desert. Aurora Borealis? Some of Whistler's paintings are not inferior to northern lights. John Ruskin was right when he said that English sunsets have waxed more colorful since Turner. Our sky would be nicer if the stars were larger, more variegated in color, and near to us. Indeed, they have become so since the astrophysicists have told us about them.

My world is a world of little Spartacuses and Hamlets, the world of Othello and Romeo, Father Goriot, Mr. Domby, the Karamazovs, David Copperfield, Manon Lescaut, Madame Bovary, Anna Karenina, a world of little Don Quixotes and Don Juans. Out of these little persons—out of us—poets create grand figures, and endow them with immortality.

I live in a world where one cannot understand anything concerning man unless one reads the marvelous books created about him by scholars and artists. Flaubert's "Simple Heart" has for me the value of an evangel, and I am ready to shout with joy for man when I read the maddest tales of Poe or Hoffmann, the evil poems of Baudelaire, the diabolically penetrating stories of Knut Hamsun —our greatest epic writer, whose "Growth of the Soil" amazes me as much as the "Iliad" does. When I read the epogee of "Jean Christophe" I know that this is one of the books which my grandchildren will regard with reverent wonderment at the mental and emotional power of the prophet, at his unshakable love for men.

To be sure, I know that this love is nowadays considered old fashioned. But what can you do if it still exists, does not wear out; and if we continue to live with its sorrows and joys? I even think that this love is becoming ever surer, wiser, and more practical, appearing somewhat dry and business-like in its external manifestations yet not losing its intrinsic and everlasting irrationality. Man's mind is the most irrational phenomenon in the phantastic life of our world.

I am a man of the earth, and outside of its men there is nothing I desire to know. Books bring me in friendly and magnanimous contact with men, inspire me with respect for them, and ever deepen my interest in man, master of the earth, creator of all that is fine and great on it.

* The preface to a book on modern European literature, to appear shortly in Paris.

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Lloyd George's Land Campaign

By JOHN A. HOBSON

THE launching of a Liberal land policy under the leadership of Mr. Lloyd George has a personal as well as a political significance. It was impossible to suppose that so restlessly ambitious and resourceful a being, deposed from the high estate to which war-statecraft had helped him, would long linger in the shade to which the dwindled fortunes of his party had consigned him. After the difficult and imperfect reconciliation of the two factions which followed the decimation of Liberalism at the polls, Mr. Lloyd George lost no time in seeking his opportunity to emerge into the limelight. To improvise a new constructive liberal policy (with a roving eye to right and left in case the need of Tory or Labor support arose) was a personal necessity.

Do not fight your enemy on his chosen ground; choose your own, is the Georgian tactic. Why tie Liberalism to the fight against protection or socialism, if you can find a rallying ground and a slogan of your own. "The land for those who till it" is indeed no novel cry, but it has in England greater political, if not economic, potency than ever before. For the war and its sequels have stripped rural England of much of its glamor, and revealed the nakedness of the land. Brains, capital, labor, productivity, and markets are lacking. The triple system which had so long endured—landowner, tenant farmer, landless labor—was becoming difficult to maintain before the war. It is now unworkable. The owner, who supplies most of the capital for maintenance and improvement, is so impoverished by taxation and high prices that he cannot "do his duty by the land."

It is true that during the period of war prosperity a large number of foresighted owners sold out to their tenants at inflated prices. Thus about a quarter of our agricultural land passed into the possession of farmers with too little capital to work it, most of whom are by this time heavily mortgaged. These occupying owners and the general body of tenant farmers have been drained of all their war profits, and in the price slump of the last few years have been sinking into deeper and deeper water. The minimum-wage boards established to secure subsistence for the laborers have collapsed, and labor is in most counties ill-paid, ill-housed, uncertain, and insufficient. More than two-thirds of our food has to be brought from overseas, paid for with increasing difficulty by reason of our diminished exports, while a million and a quarter of our workers with their families are kept in enforced idleness, producing nothing to help pay for the food they consume.

Such is the challenge to land policy which Mr. George and his committee have taken up. Their program is large, bold, and radical. It proposes that the state shall relieve the landowners (except those who can undertake to farm their land themselves) of their ownership, compensating them not by a capital sum but by a guaranteed annual rent, assessed in a land court. But though the state is to become the formal owner, it must not operate agriculture, but leave the cultivation of the soil to practical farmers who will pay rent to the state and will have to satisfy a representative county committee that their farming is efficient. These farmers are to carry out their own improvements and repairs, receiving help in the form of credit, research, electricity, and organization of the market, from the county organization. The laborer is to have not only a guaranteed minimum wage, which is to be a first charge for the determination of the rent, but a favorably situated small holding and the opportunity of getting a larger farm if he shows himself capable of working it. In a word, benefits are to be secured for all three interests in the land. The landlord is to have an income equal to the net income he now receives from the land. The farmers will have full security of tenure at a fixed rent subject to good cultivation. The laborer will have a living wage and an opportunity to get an independent living from the land.

The scheme has had a fair, though scarcely an enthusiastic, reception by the Liberal press, Tory and Labor papers and politicians preferring to regard it with contempt as the wildcat project of a group of political plungers. But there is vigor, money, and influence among the projectors, who propose to pursue an active campaign in every village. They will have to cut through a vast tangle of prejudices and misconceptions, as well as to meet valid objections, if they are to attain any wide acceptance, not to say political success for their policy. Setting aside the not inconsiderable number of those with whom the whole project is damned for its paternity, criticism is bound to fasten on certain features connected with the large part assigned to the state. The state is to take over a damaged property and guarantee its part-owners against further damage. The state is to fix fair rents, and fair wages, through committees on which it must be represented. The county committees are to say what is efficient and inefficient farming in particular cases, perhaps the most delicate of all the operations under this scheme. The state, through county loan boards, is to be the ultimate source or guaranty of credits advanced to cultivating tenants for the working of their farms. The state is to set up a commission to devise machinery for a cooperative system of transport and marketing.

Though most of the actual public work is to be done by local representative bodies and not by a central bureaucracy, it remains true that the state would be called upon to undertake delicate and risky services for which many hold it is inherently incompetent. The state socialism embodied in this scheme will thus be the first line of attack, in particular the displacement of private by state ownership, and the indefinite obligation to furnish one particular industry with business credit at the risk or expense of the taxpayer.

The report thus describes the proposed machinery and procedure:

> In each County Agricultural Authority's area would be established a County Loans Board, responsible to the Central Agricultural Loans Board.
>
> The cultivating tenant would state to the County Agricultural Authority the amount he required and the purpose to which he intended to apply it. The County Agricultural Authority would refer the application to one of its officers who would take into account the applicant's reliability and competence, the suitability of the improvement

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suggested, and the possible adequacy or possible extravagance of the demand. The Authority, on the officer's recommendation, would agree, reject, or possibly modify the proposal.

The County Agricultural Authority, using its knowledge of farmers in the county, would recommend approved applicants for credit to the County Loans Board.

On the face of it, this proposal leans too heavily upon the wisdom and integrity of a single official, and seems a poor substitute for the better ordered system of cooperative agricultural banks, prevalent in several continental countries and recently set up in Ireland. The judgment of neighboring farmers about the needs, capacity, and character of a particular farmer would surely be superior to that even of a more expert visiting official. But behind such doubts relating to administration lies the question of financial security. Can English agriculture by the suggested reconstruction be raised into such a condition of improvement or prosperity as to make the substantial credit here envisaged a safe investment for the British state, handling the resources of the taxpayer? To shore up a collapsing industry by state-found money is not an attractive proposition.

One of the great obstacles to success of the proposed reform will be the obstinate blindness to progressive methods among the mass of small farmers, especially in the south of England. Mr. George and his advisers require a willing, if not eager, acceptance of the new order by those who are to be its beneficiaries. But, assuming a fundamental soundness in the plan, it may take the effort of a generation to set it fairly afoot. Those who point at Denmark as an example of what English farmers could do must be reminded that Englishmen are not Danes. In tradition, education, character, and outlook upon life no two European peoples show greater divergencies. The superiority of Denmark in education and in cooperation is rooted, partly, in the necessities of a very small country, and, partly, in the widespread regard for knowledge and peaceful association. Though the great estates in England are being broken up, and the number of cultivating owners and small holders are increasing, it will take a long time before serious, scientific business agriculture can be established over the whole country. In other words, the scheme is a great appeal to reason, launched upon a people soaked in obstinate traditions and deep-seated prejudices. Ultimately reason may prevail: adversity, such as exists at present, is a schoolmaster of great potency. But the scholar is rather dull and a little proud of his obstinacy in the face of new ideas.

Now rapid and eager acceptance is of the essence of the situation—for the politicians. If Liberalism in Britain is to draw new life from such a reform policy it must be put in control of a government with a mandate to carry the policy into effect. Now to describe this as a political impossibility would, perhaps, be putting the odds against it too high. If Toryism went too far in reactionary audacity, and Labor were broken by the temporary success of the Reds, it is conceivable that the country might give Liberalism another trial. But it is grossly improbable that Liberals will again be in a position to form a government. If, therefore, experiments in agricultural reform were seriously attempted, they could only come about by the adoption of the substance of the scheme by the Conservatives or by Labor. Though the scheduled proposals of the Labor Party are more radical than those of Mr. George, they are not so divergent in principles, and even methods, as to prohibit a working compromise. Labor politicians will at present scout the very idea of making common cause with any school of Liberalism in this, or any other, issue. But history shows that such tempers are very short-lived. I do not, therefore, rule out the probability of an agricultural reform policy along the main lines of this report, put into effect by a political combination of Labor and Liberals. The resistance of landowning conservatives would, however, be long and stubborn. Though the landed aristocracy has lost to the commercial classes of the towns much of the political power it once wielded, it has retained almost intact the social power and consideration which count so highly in English life. This scheme of reform would rapidly destroy this social power, would put into a secondary place the sporting and other amenities of country life, and would drive the free breath of business enterprise into an occupation where the spirit of feudalism with its customary rights and privileges for the landowner and its graded status for tenants and laborers has hitherto prevailed. To stop such a "degradation" of country life conservatives will struggle to the utmost. They do not deny that something must be done, and soon, to save British agriculture. They would like to revert to their former remedy—a protective tariff. But their shrewder politicians are aware that to tax the food of their towns for the benefit of the country is impracticable. Their present line of policy, therefore, is a state subsidy to agriculture, conceived partly as a dole to distressed farmers and landowners, partly as a national defense for a country dangerously dependent on overseas supplies.

There is "realism" in this constructive policy, injurious as I believe it to be. For it faces more clearly than do these Liberals the fundamental fact that England cannot grow the foods she imports as cheaply as they can be grown elsewhere. The Liberal scheme implies, no doubt, a challenge to this statement. If science and good business methods and keen industry were put into our land, under conditions of tenure and of reward that called out the full energies of the cultivator, no doubt we could considerably reduce the amount of our dependence on foreign supplies. But if this involved taking brains and labor from other industries to develop agriculture, the total effect upon our national wealth and even our food supply might be injurious. It is no good citing the million and a quarter industrial workers who stand unemployed as evidence that town industries are normally oversupplied at the expense of agriculture. No appreciable number of these unemployed either could or would work upon the soil. Though agricultural reforms might keep some of the rising generation in the country from drifting townward, experience shows that even good offers of land do not make a country life attractive. While, therefore, Mr. George's plan has much to recommend it, it could not go far toward making Britain a self-sustaining country as regards foods or raw materials. We must still rely upon foreign countries for the greater part of these necessary supplies, paying for them with such of our manufactures and other services (shipping, banking, etc.) as other peoples will consent to receive. If we cannot work hard or skilfully enough to produce these export goods at a price the world will consent to pay, then we are doomed to a national poverty, which no reforms of our agriculture will more than mitigate.

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In the Driftway

THE Drifter will certainly never have $80,000,000, but if he had he would refrain from dumping it in a lump sum on the head of some small, defenseless college. That college can certainly never emerge from the stigma of being the most heavily endowed institution of learning in the world. No matter what masters of erudition its graduates turn out to be, they will still be pointed to with scorn as being products of an endowment of eighty millions, "when *Harvard* has only $64,000,000." Nor will Harvard men be the only ones thus to sniff and avert their heads. If the butler or the country cousin inherits a fortune, dislike of him is felt from the head of the house to the last and lowest.

* * * * *

THE reason for this unpopularity, of course, is a simple one. Mr. Duke in his naive way believed that he could build a great university as he could build a factory—by going out and buying the brick and stone, the machinery and tools, and the workmen to operate them. He forgot that he was dealing in the most elusive commodity in the world. He could no more create ideas in this wholesale fashion than he could later create a market for them. Thus he started to build his university at the wrong end. He was distressed because North Carolina had no great school; he did not stop to discover the reason for this lack. He assumed that it was want of money—and of money he knew he had plenty. But a careful examination of the ideas which have come out of North Carolina in the last two hundred years might have told him more. If North Carolina had no great university, it might have been that she had no desire for one. Now that one has been wished on her, it remains to be seen what she will do with it.

* * * * *

THE greatest universities in history—Bologna, Salamanca, Paris, Oxford, Cambridge—started with beginnings far less grand than Duke University. A group of students, a handful of books, one or two masters who were themselves hardly more than students; but they had also an invaluable boundless thirst for learning. And in that respect they were as rich as Duke University can ever be, and richer than the Drifter suspects it of being at present. If the president of Duke were a wise man he would invest his vast endowment in a handsome mausoleum for the founder; then with perhaps six of his best students he would retire to the fastnesses of the North Carolina mountains, he would build with his own hands and with the help of his companions—no longer pupils—a modest habitation, and there he would live with them and meditate with them on the workings of the universe. After a while he might be surprised by a visitor; others would come presently. In time he would find that a road had been built to his house—built by curiosity as well as eagerness to share his wilderness. He would profit by modern inventions; books could be had for asking, laboratory equipment would not need to be built painfully by hand. And if he could muster enough devotion to the pursuit of truth, he would in time find that, strangely enough, a sort of university had grown up around his front door. Perhaps it would never fall heir to eighty millions of dollars. But it might become a great university even without it. THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

California Injustice

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Your issue dated August 12 contained an editorial entitled California Justice. It had reference to the third trial and conviction in Sacramento of one Tom Connors for jury tampering. Tom Connors was then secretary of the California branch of the I. W. W. His offense was that he had mailed I. W. W. literature, violently assailing the criminal-syndicalism law, to a certain man on a jury trying an I. W. W. under that law.

In your editorial you use the following language in reference to the Sacramento *Bee* and myself:

> Now, it chanced that at that time in Sacramento, the State capital, there was a trial for criminal syndicalism, involving three members of the I. W. W., Judge Charles O. Busick, and the Sacramento *Bee*. The *Bee*, rather a fair and well-edited paper in other respects, reserves its sharpest stings for the I. W. W. Its editorials are frequently incitements to violence against this organization which its owner, C. K. McClatchy, so ardently hates. . . .
>
> Meanwhile, during the five days of the trial, the Sacramento *Bee* poured forth news items and violent editorials against the I. W. W. and all its supposed works. The jurymen received the *Bee* regularly, and they all knew that Connors was a member of the I. W. W. This, however, was not "jury tampering" and no one suggested arresting McClatchy.

The last paragraph is erroneous. "During the five days of the trial," the news items in the *Bee* thereon consisted of extremely fair accounts of the proceedings—following the unbroken rule of this paper to report all public matters without prejudice. "During the five days of the trial," the California Conference of Social Workers met in Sacramento and by a vote of 153 to 136 went on record as favoring the repeal of the criminal-syndicalism law. That action was reported in the *Bee* of May 28, 1925. The next day the *Bee* contained the only editorial in any way referring to the I. W. W. it published "during the five days of the trial." The *Bee* deemed it alike its right and its duty to defend a law thus attacked. And in so doing it stated in plain English why the law had been passed, quoting this language from the supreme court of California in the case of Steelik, a member of the I. W. W.:

> We hold the record justifies the conviction of the offense of criminal syndicalism, in that the defendant knowingly belonged to an organization which in its nature was a criminal conspiracy to change industrial control and government by unlawful and criminal methods.

What would you?

You say I ardently hate the I. W. W. I hate any organization that teaches men to be vandal Ishmaelites; that not only preaches but constantly practices assault, sabotage, arson, and promiscuous destruction of property as its principal "argument." I think every decent, law-abiding citizen should join me in that hate. And that such is the practically uninterrupted offense of the I. W. W. is no mere bald statement, but an incontrovertible fact repeatedly proved in California courts.

You are entirely wrong in declaring that "neither of the men" to whom Connors was charged with sending I. W. W. literature ever "actually served on a criminal-syndicalism jury." H. D. Arnold, to whom Connors sent such literature, served as a juryman in the trial of Joe Wagner and R. C. Russell, charged with violating the criminal-syndicalism law.

Sacramento, Calif., August 17 CHAS. K. McCLATCHY,
Editor the Sacramento *Bee*

[Mr. McClatchy is wrong. H. D. Arnold, the complaining witness against Connors, did not serve as a juryman in the

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trial of Russell and Wagner, nor did he serve on any other criminal-syndicalism jury. He was once drawn on a jury panel for the court sesssion in Sacramento in which a criminal-syndicalism case known as "Brooks et al." was slated for trial, but he did not become a juror. He was excused. The Brooks case, which also included Wagner and Russell, was never tried. Wagner and Russell were later reindicted with one Vargo, but Arnold was not even on the panel called for that case. See California Appellate Decisions, Volume 45, page 994.

As we stated, Connors (who was secretary of an I. W. W. defense committee, not of the California branch of the I. W. W.) was convicted for corrupting a juryman, by mailing a pamphlet opposing the criminal-syndicalism law to a man whom he had never seen, who never served on a jury. No jury had been drawn when Connors mailed his pamphlet to a list of names from the telephone book, including Mr. McClatchy's.

Mr. McClatchy's remarks about the I. W. W. are sufficiently corroborative of what *The Nation* said regarding his temper. We challenge him to produce court proof that the I. W. W. "practically uninterruptedly" practice "assault, sabotage, arson, and promiscuous destruction of property." He cannot do it.—EDITOR, THE NATION.]

The Negro in the North

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The article by Mr. Walter White, entitled Negro Segregation Comes North, in the current issue of *The Nation* [October 21] is interesting, but it skirts the real issue.

You can strike from the record the activities of the K. K. K., whatever they may be, and any concerted desire on the part of white people to "keep the Negro down." I feel quite sure that Mr. White believes they have the importance he attributes to them. But I doubt if they have.

The whites in the white neighborhood who object to the entrance of Negroes as residents are touched severely in the pocket-book nerve. Until both races will see that prime fact and meet that issue squarely, little permanent good can come from discussions.

Detroit, October 17 FRED H. WINTERS

He Would Welcome Letters

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Could you, through your valuable magazine, publish an appeal for a political prisoner, Charles Cline, who has been in prison for the past twelve years. An appeal was published some time ago in *The Nation*, which brought results, but only for a short time. We hope there are people who would be interested in corresponding with him once or twice a month. They can write to Box 32, Huntsville, Texas.

Paterson, N. J., October 10 HARRY WINDRATH

This Chief Is a Lady

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In your issue of August 5, page 156, appears what purports to be a dispatch from this city by the Associated Press with reference to an Indian statue, followed by nearly a column of editorial comment. You headed it Hail to the Chief!

In no complaining way do I call your attention to the fact that the whole matter would have been more historically correct if an Indian squaw had not been mistaken for a chief.

My statue has been mounted on Perrin's Ledge, the most beautiful look-out on the Illinois River and perhaps in the world. But it is the statue of a woman Indian and not a chief. It represents Nokomis, the Daughter of the Moon, whose daughter became the mother of Hiawatha—the Indian savior.

Belleville, Illinois, October 5 J. NICK PERRIN

DON'T WAIT
till the last minute

NATION DINNERS

CHINA: THE ACID TEST OF 1925 is the subject for the first *Nation* dinner, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12. Dr. Harry F. Ward, Paul Blanshard, P. W. Kuo, the first two just returned from China, will speak. Are missionaries of any use in China? Should every foreigner leave China at once? What is extra-territoriality and why is it? Come to the *Nation* dinner and discuss these and other important Chinese matters. China is not just a big yellow spot on the map; it is in the news, it grows in importance as an international problem every day. Come to the Nation dinner; hear about China. Oswald Garrison Villard, the *Nation's* editor, will preside and reservations will be made in the order in which they are received!

The second *Nation* dinner will be held THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10. Clarence Darrow, counsel in the Scopes trial at Dayton, and Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, Pastor of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, will speak on IS MAN A MACHINE? Joseph Wood Krutch, Associate Editor of *The Nation*, will be chairman. On THURSDAY JANUARY 7, Mark Van Doren, the *Nation's* Literary Editor, will preside over a debate between the critics and the authors, with a publisher added for good measure. The subject will be IS LITERARY CRITICISM IMPORTANT? WAGES FOR WIVES? is the debatable subject for the fourth *Nation* dinner, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4. Doris Stevens and Arthur Garfield Hays will speak. Freda Kirchwey, the *Nation's* managing editor, will be chairman. The date of the last *Nation* dinner will be THURSDAY, MARCH 18. Subject and speakers to be announced later.

Bring as many guests as you like to the *Nation* dinners, but reservations may be made in the name of *Nation* subscribers only. Price per plate $2.50; for the series of five, $11.00. Non-subscribers may make reservations by sending in a check for $6.00, and receiving a ticket for one dinner and *The Nation* for a year (regular price $5.00) or $15.00 for *The Nation* and a reservation for the entire series.

ALL DINNERS WILL BE HELD AT THE FIFTH AVENUE RESTAURANT, 200 FIFTH AVENUE, AND WILL BEGIN AT 7 P. M.

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Books and Plays

Composed While Under Arrest

(Translated from the Russian of Lhermontov)

By MAX EASTMAN

When waves invade the yellowing wheat,
And the saplings sway with a wind-song brief;
When the raspberry plum in the garden sweet
Hides him under the cool green leaf;

When sprinkled with lights of limpid dew,
At rose of evening or gold of morn,
The lilies-of-the-valley strew
Their silver nodding under the thorn;

When the brook in the valley with cooling breast,
Plunging my soul in a cloudy dream,
Murmurs a legend of lands of rest
At the rise of his happy and rapid stream;

Then humbled is my heart's distress,
And lulled the anguish of my blood;
Then in the earth my happiness,
Then in the heaven my God.

First Glance

WILLIAM ELLERY LEONARD'S "Two Lives" (Viking Press: $2) was written in 1913, and it is around about 1913 that we are in the habit of supposing the new poetry of America to have been born. That "Two Lives" has exerted less than its due influence directly upon Mr. Leonard's contemporaries—owing to the circumstance that it was never printed until 1922, and then only privately—will seem of little moment to another generation which will read it and call it, I am convinced, one of the best of early twentieth-century poems. Those future judges will have forgotten how Mr. Leonard's sonnet-sequence lived for so long a smothered life, and they perhaps will never have known the reason for this—the painful environment which made Mr. Leonard hesitate to tell his story to any public at all, let alone a wide one. They will see the poem, that is to say, as the work of art which it is. They will recognize in it one of the first signs that American poetry had attained to a mature subject matter and to a truly passionate style. They will compare it not unfavorably with the longer narratives which now for a decade Mr. Robinson has been putting forth, and they will find nothing of its time in England to be set beside it—nothing of Mr. Masefield's surely, though Mr. Hardy in other modes will not suffer from a comparison. And if we now are a little disturbed by touches in the poem of the old rhetoric which we pride ourselves upon having discarded—if we find it not quite so strictly emancipated in form as Mr. Robinson's best work is—they will be undisturbed, looking, as they will, through fashion into matter and mood and essential style.

I would not tell the story if I could, for it must be read in its own powerful and absolutely personal setting. Few pieces of literature have been more personal, and the reason is not merely that the tragedy unfolded is by virtue of its events an intimate one for the author. Mr. Leonard has made it even more so—I am tempted to say absolutely so—by planting it in the center of his own mind and by feeding that mind solely upon its bitter leaves. From the moment in the first sonnet when Mr. Leonard, after a swift glance backward and forward through an eternity of human circumstances, dismisses all that and settles into his theme—

> Large thoughts, before and after; yet they be
> Time's pallid backgrounds for my soul and me—

I understand that the business at hand is one man's life, is one man's vindication of a part which he had played. Mr. Leonard, like Hamlet, must get his story told; and as he concentrates himself upon his need the intensity of his telling grows. Everything is evidence of this intensity, this need—the exhortations to some audience:

> But you who read me, jest not now, I pray. . . .
>
> But I am ill at ease
> Coping with symbols in the halls of pain—
> As you may mark, confused;

the passages of realism which a more painless poet would have done more vaguely and more safely:

> Whilst I undressed her, as she groaned; detail,
> The critics tell us, makes reality;
> But should I chronicle each look and wail,
> Each garment, as I rent it horribly
> With twitch and twist of fingers, clutch of hands,
> Each ridge in face of me, you'd say I were
> (Though doing the waiting doctor's fierce commands)
> O not the husband, but the ravisher;

the ceaseless probing of conscience, the tireless going over of motives in order to make sure that nothing is left out of account. Here in this intensity, and in the beauty and the strength which by no mere chance come with it, lies at least one reason for granting a measure of greatness to "Two Lives."

MARK VAN DOREN

Two War Books

The War of Lost Opportunities. By General von Hoffmann. International Publishers. $3.50.

Blockade and Sea Power: The Blockade, 1914-1919, and its Significance for a World State. By Maurice Parmelee. T. Y. Crowell and Company. $3.

THE first of these is an important book which should be in every war library. Coming, as it does, from the officer in considerable degree responsible for the infamous Brest-Litovsk Treaty, the man who took Lenin from Switzerland to Russia in a locked car and turned him loose there, who served for two years as Chief of the German General Staff on the Eastern front, it gains weight because of its plain speaking and frank revelations. Compact and concise, it proves once more that the most wonderful military machine the world has ever seen was wrecked by the blunders of its leaders rather than the prowess of its enemies. Nearly everything the German militarists could ask for in 1914 in the way of material was provided, but the master minds needed were not available when the emergency came.

General von Hoffmann reveals the facts that the fatal withdrawal of two corps just before the Marne for service in Russia was not due, as alleged, to any appeal from the army commanders on the East front, and that they arrived too

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late to aid Hindenburg in his amazing victories. It is now widely believed that this fatal departure from the von Schlieffen plan for the swing through Belgium was due to the personal intercession of the Kaiser and Kaiserin, who were overcome by the Russian destruction in East Prussia. General von Hoffmann is emphatically of the opinion that even after the disastrous retirement of von Kluck after the Marne, it would have been possible to renew the outflanking movement and begin open warfare again by transferring ten or twelve corps to the extreme German right as suggested in vain by General Gröner. Next he blames General von Falkenhayn, the second German chief of staff, for letting slip two opportunities to destroy completely the Russian Army in the fall of 1914 and the summer of 1915. This officer was also responsible for the incredible folly and slaughter of Verdun, the failure to take Salonica, and the refusal to make a concerted effort against Italy in combination with the Austrians. General von Hoffmann was sure from 1915 on that Germany had lost the war, but he could not move the Chancellor and others in power to renounce all thought of taking Belgian territory and to try in 1917 for a peace restoring the *status quo ante*. Naturally he dwells on the folly of carrying on a submarine warfare without submarines, and on the Von Tirpitz policy of continuing to build battleships that could never count.

General von Hoffmann went through the first Russian battles with General Ludendorff, whom he knew well and greatly admired, but he saddles him with the error of trying to break through to Amiens in March, 1918, and not succeeding because he failed to bring up all available troops and confine his attack to that one point. After the failure of that effort, Von Hoffmann clearly saw that Germany ought to make peace at once. Instead Ludendorff carried on until, on the point of collapse, he had to accept any terms.

It is interesting to note that General von Hoffmann disclaims all responsibility for the abominable terms of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, which he charges to Von Kuhlmann and Czernin. But, by his own narrative, he did more than anybody else to get the Bolsheviks to accept it. His own desire was to have Germany march to Petrograd, set up a new Russian government, and raise new levies to fight for Germany. He attributes the collapse of the German army largely to Bolshevik propaganda spread by German troops rushed in the closing months to the West front from Russia. How bitterly Von Hoffmann must regret having been a party to the transfer of Lenin and his associates from Switzerland to Russia! They were to destroy the then Russian government, but they were not supposed to go further. It is interesting to note that this incident in General von Hoffmann's career is not recorded in this volume.

The translation of the book is poor, the proof-reading and editing equally so. Sentences sometimes do not end. We are never told the author's full name. In the second chapter General von Prittwitz und Gaffron becomes two persons. Peyton March becomes Payton, and titles and names suffer generally. This is a great pity because of the intrinsic value of the book, especially for the light it throws on Russian military blunders in 1914 and 1915.

Dr. Parmelee's book on the blockade is of equal worth. A description of the organization and development of the blockade during the war, it seems to be definitive and of permanent textbook value. Dr. Parmelee, who was one of the representatives of the United States War Trade Board in London in 1918 and 1919, a member of the Allied Blockade Committee, and Chairman of the Allied Rationing and Statistical Committee, traces not only the way the British and French governments developed at home the machinery to handle the blockade of the Central Powers but also the way the blockade was gradually applied to the neutrals as well until they were stripped of every right under international law and became merely vassals of the Allies. He does not fail to blame the United States for permitting this —Ambassador Page aiding and abetting instead of fighting for neutral rights the world over. Indeed, Dr. Parmelee writes as one whose eyes have been opened to the fact that both sides were guilty of great wrongs during the war; that neither had clean hands. He is especially forceful in showing how the Allies persuaded or coerced or forced one country after another to their will. His explanation of the "General Black List" instituted by Great Britain is valuable, but he does not, of course, set forth how that Black List was used during the war, as in South America, for instance, for the purpose of undermining England's trade rivals, not only for war-time, but for the post-bellum period.

Dr. Parmelee pays his respects to the late Admiral Mahan for misusing and misinterpreting historical facts in order to build up a big-navy propaganda, and is flat in his opposition to the control of the seas by the British fleet or any other. Perhaps the most valuable portion of his book is his group of chapters on Sea Power and the World State, which latter he does not find provided by the League of Nations as at present constituted. As he points out, "to incorporate the constitution of a professedly international state into a treaty which utilizes the advantages of victory in war is highly incongruous"; and he insists that a real World State ought not to oppose but to protect any nation which has adopted collectivism or state socialism from the capitalistic nations in order to safeguard the principle of self-determination of racial and national entities.

We cannot believe that this volume will be very popular with the big-business rulers of the world, since it points out how communistic had become by 1918 the whole administration of the economic world by the Allies and the United States, and shows the ease with which, following the precedent of the Supreme Economic Council, it would be possible to organize the world internationally for the purpose of holding and rationing all the remaining natural resources of the world for the benefit of all mankind. Those who think internationalism a crime will find a dangerous adversary in Dr. Parmelee. We cannot overemphasize the value of this book or the extraordinarily liberal and enlightened viewpoint of the author.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Merezhkovsky

December the Fourteenth. A Novel. By Dimitri S. Merezhkovsky. Translated from the Russian by Nathalie A. Duddington. International Publishers. $2.

"DECEMBER THE FOURTEENTH" could not have been published at a more opportune time. For in a few weeks from now our newspapers will carry dispatches describing how Soviet Russia is celebrating the centenary of the Decembrist Rebellion, the first organized blow against the ancient Russian autocracy. It is the stirring events of this rebellion, delicately interwoven with the radiant love story of Prince Golitzin, that Merezhkovsky depicts in the present novel.

To those who are acquainted with Merezhkovsky's trilogy, "Christ and Antichrist," this volume will bring no surprises. The virtues and the faults that were manifest there are in evidence here. As a literary artist, and particularly as a writer of historical novels, Merezhkovsky may doubtless be ranked among the masters. He has a rare gift for breathing life into remote epochs and historical personages. The conflicts of the past stand out clear and significant. A man of wide culture, a fine scholar, and a diligent compiler, Merezhkovsky assembles his mosaics at times even a little too meticulously. Possessed of a keen sense for the dramatic, he makes many passages vibrate with passion and beauty.

His chief fault is that he has a theological ax to grind. His monomania is Christianity and its role in the past, present,

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and future life of mankind. In itself this is not a serious fault. A bit of Christian mysticism may even add to the interest of a novel. But Merezhkovsky's mysticism is too schematic. His "path is through dichotomy to unity." Everywhere he labors for a higher synthesis: Earth and Heaven, Christ and Antichrist, Paganism and Asceticism, the Flesh and the Spirit, the Church and the State. Since his entire theological structure is built on the Hegelian triad, his characters fall symmetrically into three groups: some illustrate the thesis, some the antithesis, and some the synthesis. To a sensitive reader this sort of balancing, however skilfully done, becomes rather annoying, however agreeable it may be to a critic purely of Merezhkovsky's thought.

As a result of his religious prepossessions Merezhkovsky sometimes presents historical motivation in the wrong light, imputing his own kind of faith to some of his heroes, regardless of the historic moment in which they are made to function. It must be remembered that Merezhkovsky's religion is the expression of a decaying class in a rapidly changing society. After the "gloomy eighties" a feeling that life was unendurable, a sense of impending catastrophe, a hope for a miraculous deliverance pervaded the ranks of the Russian upper classes. These fears, desires, and yearnings were crystallized in an eclectic religious mysticism which had come down from Dostoevsky through Vladimir Soloviev and the decadents of the nineties to the "God-Seekers" of the first decade of this century. For the author to make the Decembrist Golitzin think and speak in the vernacular of a twentieth-century "God-Seeker" is, it seems, doing serious violence to historical verisimilitude.

Furthermore, the lengthy metaphysical discussions clothed in the idiom of medieval scholasticism make the meaning of Merezhkovsky's novels in parts rather obscure, except to the initiate. Strange esoteric symbols speckle his writings. Proclaimed a prophet by a small coterie of fanatical admirers, Merezhkovsky tries to live up to his part. He brands as coming from the Beast (Antichrist) anything he for the moment dislikes: positivist philosophy, science, democracy, autocracy, and, since 1917, bolshevism. In his writings one comes across pages upon pages of veiled language and vague allusions to "something," and "someone," and "somewhere." In occult whispers and stimulated epileptic outcries, *à la* Dostoevsky, this modern prophet heralds a new apocalyptic religion.

Yet, despite the faults which "December the Fourteenth" shares with the rest of Merezhkovsky's works, it is one of the most absorbing historical novels in Russian literature. Though part of a trilogy, it is complete in itself, having its own inner *raison d'être*. Thanks to the discreet efforts of the translator, a good deal of the mystical clap-trap is unceremoniously done away with. What is left is mostly a powerful, tightly knit story of the tragic failure of the rebellion. All the chief characters are historically authentic, and are drawn in a masterly fashion. Nicholas I, the czar by accident and the spy by vocation, is unforgettably vivid. The prison scenes are subtly realistic. And the silhouettes of the five youths swinging from the scaffold are profoundly affecting.

JOSHUA KUNITZ

An Epic of Culture

Sovietskaya Kultura. Izd. Izvestia ZIK SSSR i XZIK. Moscow. (Soviet Culture. Published by Izvestia. Moscow.)

THERE is a fascinating glamor of adventure about the bare facts collected in this volume which makes the book read like an epic even though it does not deal with spectacular events such as those which "shook the world" during the earlier stages of the revolution. It is an epic of creation emerging from the multitude of "dry" figures and data dealing with the practical application in the everyday life of the masses of those principles which they fought for, arms in hand, during the "heroic" period of the revolution. The new period will seem no less heroic to one who understands it.

The book represents a collection of articles and summaries which tell in the language of plain facts of what has been accomplished in the various fields of political, economic, social, and cultural activity during the first six years of the existence of the Soviet republic. And each of these accounts is a tale of bold experimenting, of treading paths upon which no one had ventured before, of the accumulation of new experiences opening up vistas of new possibilities. Not a phase of life is left which has not been touched by the wand of revolution and been subjected to a thoroughgoing change. In government a new system is being evolved which will insure actual participation in the business of government to the largest numbers of the laboring population. In the economic field a system of organization is being worked out whereby intelligent planning would take the place of the bourgeois anarchy which has made a sacred principle of the blind play of economic forces. In the province of social relations, idleness and wealth are supplanted by work, physical and intellectual, as a mark of social distinction. So also in the field of cultural activity we see the beginning of a new culture which is becoming more and more the expression of the awakened and emancipated masses.

It should be remembered that before the revolution the mass of the people had been almost entirely outside the sphere of the cultural life of the country. About 90 per cent of the people had no opportunity even for the most elementary education and they were kept in utter illiteracy. Such things as books, newspapers, theaters, museums were accessible only to the upper classes and the intelligentsia. It was left for the revolution to bring the benefits and enjoyment of culture into the daily life of the masses. But it is also evident that this culture could not be left over from the old order. It was necessary to build anew, to create a culture which would be in harmony with the material, spiritual, and aesthetic values revealed in the revolution, and which would give the most significant possible expression to the masses which have now become articulate.

In this summary of Soviet culture the story is thus told of the new system of education which has been laid down, based on the principles of the unified labor school which would ultimately accord universal general and technical training; of the progress of the tremendous task of abolishing illiteracy; of workers' clubs which have sprung up in each factory; of reading huts through which the book, the theater, and the moving picture are being introduced into the villages; of the educational work which is carried on in the army and among the youth; of "workers' faculties" which prepare workers for higher education; of the new student body which is invading the universities and colleges from the depth of the mass of workers and peasants; of the new press serving the workers and expressive of their needs; of the new motives and forms which are being evolved in the field of literature, as well as in the theater and the other arts.

On the other hand the treasures of the old culture which, prior to the revolution, served for the enjoyment of the upper-class few have been thrown open and brought to the people. Private collections of works of art have been incorporated in existing public museums or form the nucleus for new museums the number of which has grown from 30 before the revolution to 476 in 1924. The same thing has happened to the valuable collections of books which were formerly to be found only in private hands.

The facts collected in this book are those which are most frequently overlooked in the daily chronicling of events. Their significance becomes fully apparent when they are brought together and correlated. The sum of these facts is the sum of the revolutionary change which is burrowing into the deep of the masses and forming the foundation for the new life.

L. TALMY

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The Nation's Poetry Prize

THE NATION offers an annual poetry prize of $100 for the best poem submitted by an American poet in a contest conducted by *The Nation* each year between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. The rules for the contest in 1925 are as follows:

1. Each manuscript submitted in the contest must reach the office of *The Nation*, 20 Vesey Street, New York City, not earlier than Tuesday, December 1, and not later than Thursday, December 31, plainly marked on the outside of the envelope "For *The Nation's* Poetry Prize."

2. Manuscripts must be typewritten and must have the name of the author in full on each page of the manuscript submitted.

3. As no manuscripts submitted in this contest will in any circumstances be returned to the author it is unnecessary to inclose return postage. An acknowledgment of the receipt of each manuscript, however, will be sent from this office.

4. No more than three poems from the same author will be admitted to the contest.

5. No restriction is placed upon the subject or form of poems submitted, which may be in any meter or in free verse. It will be impossible, however, to consider poems which are more than 400 lines in length or which are translations or which are in any language other than English. Poems arranged in a definite sequence may, if the author so desires, be counted as a single poem.

6. The winning poem will be published in the Midwinter Literary Supplement of *The Nation*, to appear February 10, 1926.

7. Besides the winning poem, *The Nation* reserves the right to purchase at its usual rates any other poem submitted in the contest.

The judges of the contest are the editors of *The Nation*. Poems should in no case be sent to them personally.

Books in Brief

American Poetry 1925: A Miscellany. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

A third volume in the series which Mr. Louis Untermeyer inaugurated five years ago. Although some excellent work mingles with a good deal that is dull, the value of the whole is not quite clear.

Arnold Bennett. By Mrs. Arnold Bennett. Adelphi Company. $2.

A rather silly performance, though not a little picturesque information is purveyed between the gasps of adulation.

Cuchulainn. An Epic-Drama of the Gael. By Terence Gray. Cambridge, England: W. Heffer and Sons. 12/6.

A highly intelligent rendering in rather undistinguished prose of the whole history of Ulster during the reign of King Conchubhar. Conchubhar is the central figure, but Cuchulainn is the central hero; and Deirdre and Queen Maeve make their tragic contributions to the story under auspices which are in many respects new. Mr. Gray's introduction, in which he criticizes the handling of his characters by recent Irish poets and dramatists, is Shavian in its common sense and refreshing in its return to the probable facts. A valuable because unsentimental version of one of the greatest of all legends.

The English Comic Characters. By J. B. Priestley. Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.50.

Spirited yet essentially commonplace criticism of some of the comic creations of Shakespeare, Fielding, Sterne, Jane Austen, Peacock, and Dickens. There is room for a truly—even gravely—analytical discussion of Falstaff, Shandy, *et al.* Mr. Priestley is merely one more man surprised and delighted.

John Marston: The Scourge of Villanie (1599). Samuel Daniel: A Defence of Ryme (1603); Thomas Campion: Observations in the Art of English Poesie. Vols. 13 and 14 of The Bodley Head Quartos. E. P. Dutton and Company. $1.50 each.

Convenient and attractive editions of three documents bearing on Elizabethan poetic theory and practice.

The Panchatantra. Translated from the Sanskrit by Arthur W. Ryder. University of Chicago Press. $4.

The first complete version in English, and one which fortunately is very readable, of this fountainhead of Western story.

Histriophone: A Dialogue on Dramatic Diction. By Bonamy Dobrée. 3/6. *The Character of John Dryden.* By Alan Lubbock. 2/6. *Contemporary Techniques of Poetry. A Political Analogy.* By Robert Graves. 3/6. The Hogarth Essays. London: The Hogarth Press.

Interesting additions to an admirable series. Mr. Dobrée, author of a book on Restoration drama, tries his hand at a critical dialogue in the Restoration mode. Mr. Lubbock contributes, somewhat too much in the style of Pater, one of the best brief analyses of Dryden to date. Mr. Graves, as usual, is both fantastic and shrewd.

Chaplin and Some Others

By GILBERT SELDES

A LITTLE belatedly I come to three of the summer films: "The Gold Rush," "The Merry Widow," and "The Unholy Three." Report on them has been that they were all outstanding; and the first and last easily justify the rumor. "The Merry Widow" is a mixture of very good and not quite so good; it is superior to most ordinary films in the rigorous elimination, almost complete, of the actively bad. I do not know who followed von Stroheim in completing the work he began, and can only guess which director is responsible for which part. What is good is the employment of the camera more consistently than usual, the enrichment of its vocabulary, the growing accuracy of its accent. Technically, as all the movie journals say, the film is a high mark; but this applies more to the way the camera worked than to the way the actors played. There was a deal of attractiveness in Mae Murray at times, a touch of lightness in John Gilbert, of irony in Roy d'Arcy (as I recall the name of the Crown Prince), and something quite good in Tully Marshall; but excepting the last, all of these, at one time or another, played heavily and dully.

In connection with "The Unholy Three" it is quite clear that first credit goes to the director, Tod Browning; but at least a word must be said for Tod Robbins, who wrote the story. For the movies it is wholly unusual—the story of a ventriloquist, a dwarf, a strong-man, and a girl pickpocket, all in a small circus, joining their talents to become a gang of burglars, the ventriloquist and the dwarf masquerading as an old woman and a baby. Lon Chaney, the ventriloquist, was an uncommonly intelligent creation, for he was to just the right degree sinister and attractive; and the dwarf gave utterance to such appalling sentiments, made gestures of such unholy glee at the atrocities of his own creation that even the moderate success of the film, in a world of sloppiness, astonished me. The success is due to Mr. Browning, who did what the movie always can do and has seldom been asked to do. He deliberately removed the picture from the tone of reality. Without marking it "fantasy" and without using the distortions of setting and costume which got the same effect for "Caligari," he managed, largely by taking all his important scenes in obscure, unidenti-

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fied corners, to suggest that everything going on was unrelated to our known existence. Four feet of a neutral wall, a bank of filing cabinets, fifteen feet of pavement, the place for three chairs—these hemmed in the extraordinary drama in all the best parts. There was weakness when, toward the end, we had to have a jury trial and a scene in a mountain cabin; yet even here the camera selected far more than it embraced. When Chaney with Mae Busch, who gave a remarkably fine performance as the pickpocket, had to meet for the scene in which she rejects his love, the whole outdoors was suffused with a light quite unreal.

There were many other small things as good; in the main this picture provided fantasy linked with the picaresque; it used the imagination. And its fate has been only moderately reassuring. The intellectuals have been captivated; the public has been startled, but not quite to the point of enthusiasm. Yet it is agreeable to think that a fantastic picture was made not for or by the highbrows, that Mr. Browning has given himself a distinct position among the directors, that Chaney and Mae Busch have done highly superior work in a film more suited to their talents than most of those they work in. They and "The Unholy Three" are on one of the many paths which make up the right way of the movies.

Mr. Chaplin, of course, has never deserted that way. "The Gold Rush" had a tremendous success which ought to persuade Mr. Chaplin again that he is right and has always been right. The hokum was good hokum; the story was not treated too seriously; and the great moments were tragi-comic in the finest way. Nothing I had heard prepared me for the actuality. In the dream which blessedly obliterates the agony of Charlie's waiting for his guests on New Year's Eve he does the Oceano Roll, the little dance with two rolls impaled on forks. It is deft and funny; but what makes it beautiful is that, although you hardly know it, Charlie's face, like those comic photographs in which you appear over a tiny ballet dress, is the focus of interest, miming the dance, filling it with emotion. The scene in which he enters the dance hall, utterly friendless, the loneliest man on earth, going to the one place where all men are companions, and finds himself isolated, is of a rare poignance. Almost without gesture he makes you feel his awareness that he will never become one of the crowd, that they are a rigid society from which he is eternally excluded.

The comic climax of the film comes early, in the scene of the cabin teetering over the edge of the abyss, and that scene is a whole textbook of the art of film comedy. Essentially it is hokum, but it is Chaplin's supreme talent to endow everything he does with life, and the hokum disappears under his magic hands, becoming the pure gold of comedy. In this scene he does it by a hundred touches. The cabin has been blown to the precipice while the two prospectors slept; snow has frozen the windows and doors; and it is the struggle between Charlie's stubbornness and the stubbornness of the frozen door which makes his swing, when the door gives, so funny. When the cabin is almost perpendicular in the air and the two men are crawling up its floor, it is Charlie's gesture and the words "Take it easy" which lift the scene. He in every case creates a picture, imagines something and makes you see what he has imagined.

The day after I saw "The Gold Rush" I revisited two of Chaplin's early masterpieces, "The Pawn Shop" and "The Immigrant." I have not the space to detail the changes and the progress which such a comparative view indicates. But, still feeling that "The Pawn Shop" is a masterpiece in its kind, possibly *the* masterpiece of early movie comedy, I experience no regret at the thought that Chaplin no longer makes that type. For he has grown naturally, according to his destiny; he has kept alive all the essential things, and developed precious new ones. He is still the same because his great moments were never tricks; they were and are manifestations of an actual creative genius. It is a question now of what interests him as raw material; what he does with the material when he has chosen it is always the same and always wonderful.

Drama

Made in Czecho-Slovakia

WHEN in the past the Theater Guild has chosen to squander its unparalleled resources upon the production of a trifle by Molnar I have been disposed to regard the action as a temporary and forgivable vagary, but now that the Hungarian threatens to become a habit it behooves even the passionate admirers of our most dignified theatrical institution to protest in sorrow, if not in anger, for, whatever the conventional theatrical virtues of the complacent author of "Liliom," they are not virtues which stand high in the scale which the Guild itself has sponsored. Back in 1915 when the organization was still in its Third Avenue cradle a wearisome dexterity was generally regarded as the supreme attribute of the dramatist, but the Guild was a breaker of tablets and a transvaluator of values. It, more than any other producing group, taught us to think of the drama in terms of life rather than in terms of the theater, and the first article of its credo embodied the belief that even an unpolished verity was preferable to the most silken of artificialities. Those of us who gathered in the small auditorium at the Band Box deliberately sought it out as a refuge from Molnar and his kind, and as we increased in numbers we enabled the Guild first to establish itself in one of the suburbs of Broadway and then to erect its mansion in the very center of the dramatic world. Surely it does not, as a result, deliberately propose to go over body and soul to the enemy camp; yet it did give last year a place of honor to a trifling comedy by Molnar which a "commercial manager" had previously produced, and this year it opens its official season with a much more pretentious and even emptier play by the same author. "The Glass Slipper" would be offensive anywhere, but to find it sponsored by the Guild is like coming upon a poster by James Montgomery Flagg in the Louvre.

Molnar is, indeed, the exact antithesis of that for which the Guild is supposed to stand. It was, I have always believed, founded to produce plays which were more than merely plays and to show that the drama could be, like the novel, a commentary upon life, whereas the most striking thing about Molnar's plays is their complete theatricality. They are entirely confined within the frame of the proscenium arch and once the curtain has descended upon them they cease absolutely to exist. Their characters, situations, and ideas have a certain reference to one another, but they have reference to nothing else. They remind you of nothing and they set you thinking of nothing because they belong to a world which has arc lights instead of sun and grease paint instead of flesh. One can ask as often as one likes whether or not the wife in "The Guardsman" penetrated immediately the disguise of her husband, but one can get no answer to the fatuous question because the wife being merely a puppet neither knew nor failed to know; one may speculate to all eternity concerning the meaning of "Liliom" because it has no meaning; and one may ask in vain whether the conclusion of "The Glass Slipper," in which a love-sick serving maid is finally united to the middle-aged object of her idolatry, is sentimental or cynical for the simple reason that the question has no meaning in connection with a play whose logic is not the logic of human emotion but merely the logic of theatrical manipulation. As for Molnar himself he neither knows nor cares. For two hours and a half he has pulled the strings and now with the fall of the final curtain he has let them drop. Any one who likes may pick them up again and may make the marionettes perform whatever evolutions he likes, but to expect them to live of themselves or to inquire into their thoughts or motives is as absurd as to attribute a Freudian complex to a sawdust doll. "Why," we might quite as sensibly ask, "does the cuckoo make his hourly sortie from the door of a Swiss clock? Is a sincere

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desire for self-expression his only motive or is he, perhaps, merely in search of a wooden worm?"

Fancy, to be sure, has its uses; Pierrot and Harlequin can enact a drama of their own. But Molnar invents no symbols, for he tends always to fall below rather than to transcend actuality. His mannequins are gaudy, but they are not touched by imagination; his situations are strained, but they are only parodies of human complications; and thus it is that every departure from nature only serves to show more clearly the vulgarity of his nature. To say that "The Glass Slipper" is as bad as "The Green Hat" would be, perhaps, a little extreme, but it is hardly better; and to say that June Walker, Helen Westley, Lee Baker, and George Baxter transform themselves into very cunningly articulated marionettes is only to make things worse. If, thanks to them, the public can be made to accept the play they will nevertheless have no legitimate cause for pride.

Unfortunately Sidney Howard's "Lucky Sam McCarver" (The Playhouse) must also be set down as a failure, but it is at least an honest and honorable one. The play, which deals with the conflicting creed of the self-made man and the aristocrat born, is never dull and Clare Eames gives an admirable portrait of the woman of the world, but the intention of the piece is so obscured in the intricacies of the plot that one never quite knows what it is about. At the Little Theater is an elaborated and visually charming production of "The School for Scandal," a play which no one except Bernard Shaw has ever succeeded in disliking during the century and a half of its existence. Doubtless its ethics are a little old fashioned, but the vigor of its wit is undiminished and its various theatrical punches are still strangely effective in spite of their antiquity. Mrs. Insull has not undertaken the impossible task of making Lady Teazle a profound study in feminine psychology, but she is pretty, vivacious, and charming. "Antonia" (Empire Theater) tells the well-worn story of the middle-aged woman who returns for one night to the scene of her former triumphs as the idol of a Budapest restaurant. The restaurant scene is strongly reminiscent of various musical comedies, but in spite of the fact that, this being a play, one waits in vain for the languorous waltz and the passionate farewell which generally furnished the climax to this story, the scene is moderately amusing. Marjorie Rambeau is the lady in question. "The Enemy" (Times Square Theater) is another of Channing Pollock's melodramatic moralities whose virtues are as unquestionably popular as they are unquestionably non-literary.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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A Soviet Budget for 1926

THE following digest of the "control figures" of the Institute for Planned Economics of the Soviet Union, made by L. F. Winow, of Moscow, has been taken from *International Press Correspondence:*

The Institute for Planned Economics of the Soviet Union recently published its "control figures for the political economy of the economic year 1925-26" (October 1, 1925 till September 30, 1926). In this the methodological introduction is followed by a general and detailed survey of the probable economic and financial results of the coming economic year. The Soviet government has succeeded for the first time in drawing up beforehand an economic plan including every branch of economics, for a whole year in advance. . . .

The "control figures" cannot of course represent more than an attempt to comprise in concrete figures the statistics of the driving forces of the whole of our economic life. . . . It is more than natural that the first attempt at a work of such far-reaching importance cannot be quite perfect or free from errors—but the fact in itself that such a calculation in advance, covering every department of economic life, is possible in the Soviet Union, and solely in the Soviet Union, shows that the new economic policy does not represent a transition from war communism back to capitalism but forward to socialism; herein lies the great importance of the attempt. . . .

Agricultural Production

The material part of the survey, from which we can here only adduce a few of the most important points, begins with an analysis of agricultural production, showing the output of 1924-25, calculated at pre-war prices, to have been 71 per cent of the output of 1913, as follows:

	Millions in pre-war roubles		
	1913	1924-25	Per cent
Tillage	11,782	8,106	69
Forestry, fishing, and hunting, agriculture collectively	1,044	1,044	100
	12,826	9,150	71

The Institute for Planned Economics calculates upon agricultural production increasing by 26 per cent during the next economic year, so that the probable yield from tillage will be 89 per cent of pre-war production and from forestry, fishing, and hunting 115 per cent.

Of those branches of agriculture whose output already exceeds the pre-war level, special mention must be made of the potato output, which has already attained 116 per cent of the pre-war standard, and is calculated at 127 per cent for the coming year.

With reference to the quantities of goods placed upon the market, these represent for agriculture a value of 2,857 million pre-war roubles as compared with 4,498 million in 1913, or 64 per cent. Next year the value will be 3,369 million pre-war roubles, or 89 per cent.

The ratio of the amount of goods to collective production is thus somewhat lower than before the war, a circumstance partially explicable by the after effects of the enormous reduction in the traffic in goods during the war communism period, and partially by the dividing up of the large landed properties, resulting in a comparatively high increase of consumption among the peasantry itself.

The products of cattle rearing will be maintained at approximately the same level during the coming economic year as in the present year, that is, at 80 per cent of the pre-war production. The mutual relations of the various branches of production pertaining to cattle rearing will, however, undergo considerable alterations. The previous failures of crops have had the effect of inducing breeders to reduce their livestock, but this year's good crops, enabling the animals to be kept, will probably cause a decline in the production of meat and raw leather; this will, however, be compensated by the increased output of eggs and milk.

Industry

With regard to the development of industry, we find a general increase of production to the amount of 54 per cent as compared with the previous year. Next year it will increase by about 34 per cent as compared with this. This development is unequal in the different branches of production. While the beginning of our reconstructive work witnessed the rapid development of small and light industries working immediately for the needs of the masses, the last few years have seen great advances in the reconstruction of the large industries. . . .

Comprehensive Table of Total Production

A. Agriculture

	In million pre-war roubles[1]			Per cent as compared to 1913	
	1913	1924-25	1925-26	1924-25	1925-26
Tillage	11,782	8,106	10,236	69	87
Forestry, fishing, hunting	1,044	1,044	1,200	100	115
Total agriculture	12,826	9,150	11,436	71	89

B. Industry

Large undertakings	5,621	3,950	5,280	70	94
Medium and small undertakings	1,390	1,050	1,370	76	94
Total industry	7,011	5,000	6,650	71	95
Total production	19,837	14,150	18,086	71	91

Price Movement

The control figure commission, after harmonizing various standpoints, considers a fall in the price index for industrial products by 9 per cent, for agricultural products by 8 per cent, and of the total index by 8.3 per cent, to be probable. The price index is thus as follows:

	1913	1924-25	1925-26 probably
Agriculture	1000	1693	1565
Industry	1000	1905	1733
Total index	1000	1796	1647
Percentage of agricultural index to total	100	94	95
Percentage of industrial index to total	100	106	105

The question of the development of wages and of the productivity of labor requires to be dealt with in a special article. It need only be mentioned that in the coming economic year real wages will reach on an average 100 per cent of pre-war wages. The struggle to attain and surpass the European and American wage level can then begin. With respect to unemployment, it may be observed that the rapid increase of production has already brought about a shortage of skilled labor.

Foreign Trade

In so far as absolute figures are concerned, foreign trade is still far below its pre-war level. This is only natural, since the development of export, especially in agriculture, invariably expresses the stage of production reached the previous year, while the amount of imported goods in the Soviet Union is

[1] It is specially pointed out that in the categories 1924-25 and 1925-26 not the actual gold price, but the pre-war price of the amount produced, is stated.

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chiefly made dependent on the amount exported. We may thus say, dynamically speaking, that foreign trade has developed comparatively as rapidly as or even more rapidly than the other branches of economics. Thus we find in the estimate for the coming economic year that this year's export sum is almost tripled (274 per cent). We append a collective survey of foreign trade:

	In million pre-war roubles			In million gold roubles		Pct. to 1913		Pct. to previous year 1925-26 Calculated in	
	1913	1924-25	1925-26	1924-25	1925-26	1924-25	1925-26	Pre-war rbls.	Gold rbls.
Export:									
Agriculture	927	204	559	354	950	22	60	274	268
Industry	378	66	121	108	150	17	32	183	139
Total	1305	270	680	462	1100	21	52	252	238
Import:									
Agriculture	297	145	189	255	475	49	64	130	186
Industry	710	194	329	341	475	27	46	170	139
Total	1007	339	518	596	950	34	51	153	159

The Building of Dwelling Houses

With respect to the provision of housing accommodation, the control figures provide the following program for the next economic year:

	Million gold roubles
For the renovation of entirely dilapidated houses...	100
For the renovation of semi-dilapidated houses and the completion of new houses already begun..	100
For the construction of new houses to replace buildings unfit for habitation	70
For the building of houses to accommodate the increase of population	105
Total	375

The closing chapter of the control figures deals with the process of socialization in the economic life of the Soviet Union. The capital value in the hands in the state at the beginning of the economic year 1924-25 (dwelling houses excepted) amounts to at least 11.7 milliard gold roubles; the value of the cooperative capital amounts to 500 million gold roubles; the total value of the socialized capital thus amounts to 12.2 milliard gold roubles, while the private—mainly agricultural—undertakings have merely 7.5 milliards at their disposal. The capital of the country is thus socialized to the extent of more than 62 per cent.

In detail:

	Socialized up to:
Municipal capital with industry and transport.	97 per cent
Industry	89 per cent
Big industry alone.....	99 per cent
Agricultural capital only to the extent of.....	4 per cent [1]

The following table shows the gradually increasing preponderance of socialized industry in every branch of industrial production:

Gross Production

Year	State and co-operative industry million gold roubles	Private undertakings million gold roubles	Total million gold roubles
1923-24	5562 = 76.3%	1728 = 23.7%	7290 = 100%
1924-25	7550 = 79.3%	1970 = 20.7%	9520 = 100%
1925-26	9186 = 79.7%	2334 = 20.3%	11520 = 100%

The general survey of the economic prospects of the Soviet Union thus gained shows that next year the pre-war level will be nearly approached, and that this pre-war level has already been overtaken in several branches of industry. Most important of all is the fact that industry is developing straight along the road to socialism, to an ever higher degree of nationalization, and to an ever higher form of economic organization.

The struggle for the socialization of agriculture is, however, still in its preliminary stage. We have before us some decades of obstinate struggle for the cooperatives, for the supplying of the poorer peasantry with means of production, and not last for the industrialization of agriculture, this fundamental condition of socialization. . . .

[1] With the exception of the land itself, which is of course socialized 100 per cent.

The Revival of the Russian Industry

FROM the Russian Information Bureau comes the information which follows on Russian industry and trade for the past year:

Throughout the year the Soviet currency was the only major currency in Europe to hold consistently at slightly above the dollar parity. During the year the currency in circulation increased by about 80 per cent. These remarkable gains were made in the face of a severe handicap in the poor harvest of 1924 in a country where upward of 90 per cent of the people live on the land and the yield of the soil is normally an index of the national economy. The poor harvest reduced the grain exports, which ordinarily make up nearly half the value of the export trade, to a negligible quantity. For most of the months during the year there were no grain exports whatever.

The present state of productivity in the Union is the more remarkable when one considers that four years ago the industrial processes were paralyzed, much basic machinery was hopelessly depleted, the output was less than 20 per cent of that of 1913, and the currency was in an advanced state of depreciation.

The grain crop of the past summer was estimated at close to three billion bushels, by far the best since the war. The wheat crop of 660,000,000 bushels marked an increase of 100 per cent over 1924. At the close of September it was estimated that the surplus of all grains for export would be close to 300,000,000 bushels, valued at about $240,000,000. The yield per acre of all grains this year was greater than that of 1913, wheat being 25 per cent greater. This increase doubtless reflects the increasing use of tractors and more efficient methods resulting from increased literacy among the peasants and the steady flow of radio lectures on agriculture into the receivers in village "reading huts." Before the war there were less than 500 tractors in the whole Russian Empire. By September 15 last there were 12,500, most of which had been imported from the United States during the past eighteen months. During the current fiscal year it is planned to increase the number by 22,000 more.

The budget of a socialist state is an index of economic expansion. The budget for the past year amounted to about $1,300,000,000, an increase of nearly 100 per cent over the previous year. The budget for 1925-26 shows a further increase of nearly 40 per cent over the past year and stands equal to the pre-war Czarist budget. The increased resources of the country have made possible a resumption of the ambitious program of national education which was held in abeyance for several years for economic reasons. The amount expended for education last year was greater than in any pre-war year.

The feature of Soviet foreign trade is the steady rise of imports from the United States. Today, despite the severe handicaps, American imports top those of all other countries on the Soviet list. The Russian-American trading companies reported for the first half of the calendar year 1925 a trade turnover of about $59,000,000, of which Soviet purchases here were $53,600,000. The trade turnover in 1913, on a half-year basis, was valued at about 40 per cent of this figure.

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Science and the Workers' Revolution

THE English edition of *International Press Correspondence* prints the following article by A. Lunacharsky, Russian Commissar of Education, on the two-hundredth anniversary celebration of the Russian Academy of Science, which was held on September 5 with great international festivities:

The jubilee of the Academy of Science was turned into a great festival of the whole Union and at the same time of the whole world. The Government arranged a great celebration of this jubilee which found a hearty echo both in the press and among the public. The whole scientific world, and with it public opinion in all countries, devoted considerable attention to this event. The opinions expressed abroad varied greatly. Some scientific institutes and individual scientists were bewildered, some of them even indignant. They did not know what attitude to take toward this jubilee which at the same time as being a great festival in the world of science was also a festival of the hated Union of the Socialist Soviet Republic. But it was precisely the existence of this element of disapproval in the international opinion of scientists and of the public which gave the event peculiar vitality.

What was it that really took place? Would our academicians be right in saying that their personal merits, highly appreciated on all sides, made them, on the occasion of this festival, the center of attention of the whole world? Would they be right if they were to regard the academy's achievements in the domain of science during the past 200 years, which indeed represent a huge number of discoveries and attainments to which everyone must pay respect, as the chief cause of this attention and of the dignified, extraordinary character of this festival?

No. In spite of our extreme respect for the now living academicians and for their predecessors, we must say that the festival of the academy was, of course, impressive and remarkable, but that it owes its immense significance to the fact that a great scientific institution with traditions of extraordinary value *has placed its services voluntarily at the disposal of the first socialist state.*

It is just this which gives the event world-wide historical importance. As a matter of fact, it was proved on this day of celebration that the proletariat and, mark you, the proletariat of one of the most backward countries of Europe, having taken the power into its own hands, knows how to appreciate science.

Is it really conceivable that the shining lights of culture can peaceably work together with the masses of the people who have overthrown the dictatorship of the ruling classes? The festival proved that this is not only possible but natural. It proved to the whole world in the most telling way that Lassalle was right when he anticipated an alliance between "the fourth estate and science."

As the first step in a solemn fraternization between the liberated workers and science, the jubilee of our academy with its impressive celebration has become a magnificent event; at this festival, scientists from all over the world flocked to witness the official, formally celebrated espousals of the workers' revolution with science.

As a rule, official celebrations are dull, the speeches delivered are officially optimistic and at the same time officially uninformed. The festival of our academy was quite different. Every word spoken was original and significant. No single historian of general culture will in the future be able to pass over this powerful manifestation of a regrouping of social and cultural forces, the final result of which will be the creation of an entirely new world which the Old World is painfully laboring to bring forth.

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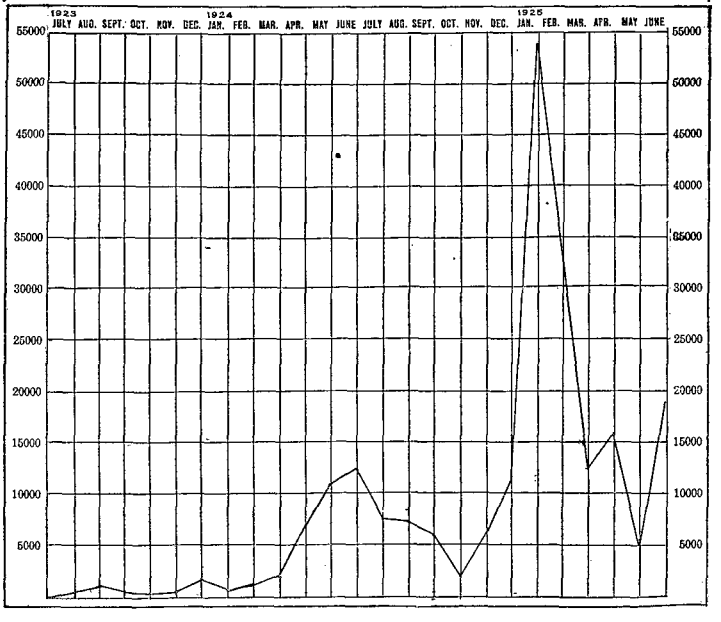

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Contributors to This Issue

MAURICE G. HINDUS is the author of "The Russian Peasant and the Revolution."

WILLIAM RESWICK is an American journalist now in Moscow.

MICHAEL GOLD has written a play about the Mexican revolution, soon to be produced by the Provincetown Players in New York.

VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY is one of the futurist group of Russian poets. He is about to return to Russia after a visit in the United States and Mexico, as the result of which he has written a volume of American poems.

LOUIS FISCHER is *The Nation*'s correspondent in Moscow.

PAXTON HIBBEN was a member of the Russian Commission of the Near East Relief whose report on the famine was published by *The Nation* in 1922. He has since devoted most of his time to Russian relief.

MAXIM GORKI is now living in Italy.

JOHN A. HOBSON is an English economist and a contributing editor of *The Nation*.

MAX EASTMAN, formerly editor of the *Masses* and the *Liberator*, has lived abroad for three years, mostly in Russia.

JOSHUA KUNITZ, of the faculty of the College of the City of New York, is writing a book about Merezhkovsky.

GILBERT SELDES is the author of "The Seven Lively Arts."

Notification has been received from the Post Office Department that it is against one of their rulings to extend the time of a prize contest, and that October 15 must officially be considered the closing date for the Student-Worker Contest, as originally announced, instead of November 1.

Editors of The Nation

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